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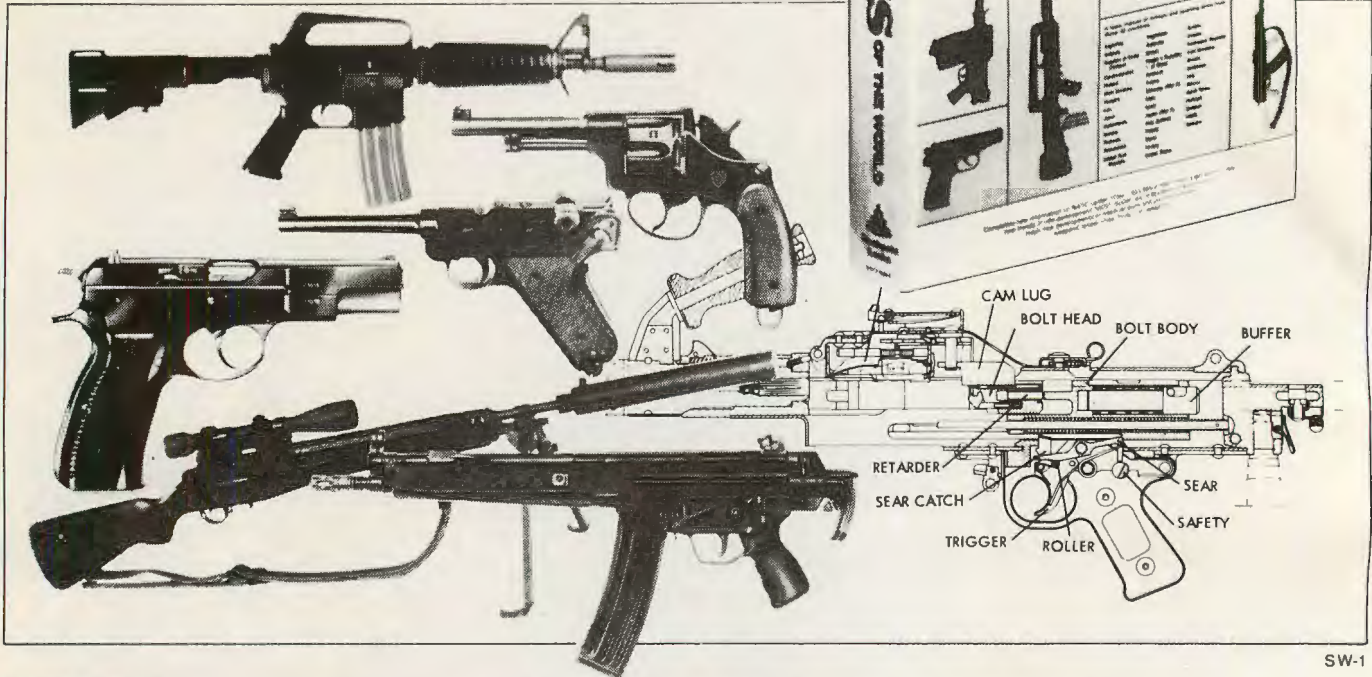
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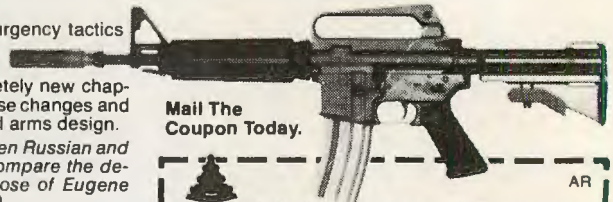
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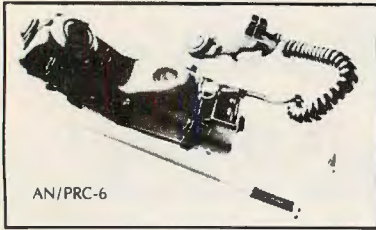
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Bulletin Board

PMRS REPORT . . .

On November 30, 1977, Alexander McColl, SOF Military Editor and Secretary-Treasurer of PARACHUTE MEDICAL RESCUE SERVICE (PMRS) presented a PMRS Certificate of Appreciation to John Lampmann, Legislative Assistant to PMRS Honorary Director Congressman Garry Brown (R-Mich). The award was made in Congressman Brown's office; in fact the photo was taken by the honorable Congressman.

Congressman Brown's office, and John Lampmann in particular, gave indispensable help during the Guatemala earthquake in February 1976, by establishing liaison with the Guatemalan Embassy in Washington, and with the various U.S. Government Agencies concerned with the relief of that disaster. Without them it would not have been possible for PMRS to make its contribution there. Congressman Brown and Mr. Lampmann have also been a principal point of contact for PMRS in efforts since then to respond to disaster situations around the world.

CUBANS IN AFRICA AND CANADA

Pro-West UNITA forces have captured part of yet another trained hit team. The mission of this group was to assassinate Jonas Savimbi, leader of UNITA.

The hit team of eight men was surprised outside the town of Catete, less than 50 kms east of Luanda, the capitol. In the ambush five of the assassins were killed or wounded and three uninjured were taken prisoner and readily talked, before they were executed.

One of those captured, Georgas Philliphot, a Haitian exile, related to his captors that he had been recruited in Montreal, Canada, in September 1977, at the Cuban Commercial Mission and had been sent to Paris on a commercial flight. He was then smuggled to East Germany and received training in making bombs, communications, and guerrilla warfare.

Philliphot told the UNITA intelligence officer that he had been scheduled to return to Montreal to participate in an operation devised by the Cubans to scatter bombs around Quebec. Some were to be placed in or around English establishments so that Separatists would be blamed, others around French establishments, so that the English would be blamed, in order to precipitate open urban warfare between French and English-speaking Canadians!

RHODESIAN EMPLOYMENT

SOF has received the following information from the Department of Immigration, Private Bag 7711, Causeway, Salisbury, Rhodesia:

Employment opportunities in Rhodesia are generated mainly by our total Euro-

pean population of approximately 275,000.

Vacancies exist for qualified artisans in the more common fields, for example: fitter/turners, electricians, motor mechanics, boiler makers, welders, printers, etcetera; and to a lesser degree for qualified technicians — engineers, miners and surveyors.

"Qualified Artisan" means an artisan who has served an apprenticeship recognized by the appropriate National Industrial Council and acceptable for registration.

Senior executive posts in the administrative, managerial and production fields are very limited and experience has shown that this type of position would normally be a promotion post in the company or organization concerned. However, should such a position be advertised the applicants would, in most instances, be required to hold some type of professional qualification.

Rhodesian employers in general are not keen to take on temporary employees. Many employers prefer to double up on jobs and thus maintain a measure of continuity, rather than go through the induction of a temporary employee for a matter of months.

CRASH FATALITIES

We have just learned of the death of Larry (Chimp) Chmela 1 August 1977, 11 days after a severe motorcycle crash. Chmela had moved to Dillon, Montana, and had returned to Chandler, Minnesota, for a visit when the accident occurred. He was buried in Chandler.

LTC (Ret) Bob Lunday, 44, was killed, along with his father, in a glider accident in Florida on October 27, 1977. He is survived by his wife, Ly, and two children who live at 19 Camelia St., Gulf Breeze, Florida 32561. Bob is remembered as one of the most dedicated Special Forces troopers and had many close comrades in SF. He is also survived by a brother, LTC Dan Lunday, Ft. McNair, who is attending the National War College.

BABY'S TERROR DEATH

In late September 1977, approximately 25 terrorists attacked the homestead of Michael and Marina Glenny, Highlands Estate, Chipinga, near Salisbury, Rhodesia. The young couple, married for three years, had a child, Natasha, 6½ months old.

The Glennys had been on a routine check of their cattle and were ambushed at a roadblock near their home. They escaped on foot. When they reached their home, the shocked father found the body of his daughter.

"She was lying face down," he said. "Her back was a mass of lacerations and

her flesh was white and pulpy. Before she was bayoneted she was thrown across the veranda."

Although the baby's native nurse had attempted to save the child, the terrorists intervened. Michael Glennly wants the world to know what happened to Natasha in hopes that she will not have died in vain.

RED FORCES MAUL LAOS REBELS

Combined Lao-Vietnamese forces killed at least 1,300 Meo rebels, wounded over 800, and captured some 5,400 others in the mountainous Phu Bia region north-east of Vietiane in late 1977, according to a ranking Thai intelligence source, as reported in the Bangkok Post.

The Post declared that the Communists, supported by air strikes and artillery bombardment, had captured seven rebel strongholds and were advancing in a pincer movement to trap the remaining Meo hilltribesmen, who number nearly 60,000. The die-hard tribesmen reportedly control only 400 square kilometers of the jungled area in northern Laos.

JEFF COOPER WARNS . . .

Jeff, in the February 1978 issue of the *American Pistol Institute Bulletin*, wrote:

"Back to the barricades, friends! The proposed Carter anti-gun package is an absolute disaster. Let every voter who values his rights as a free man tell his

three federal legislators (two senators, one congressman) that the forthcoming election is a *one issue* proposition. Do it! Write! Tell your men that you must know their position on this atrocious proposal, and that you will vote for or against them on that issue, *and that alone*. We care not what course others may take, but as for us . . ."

CUBANS FOILED

When a general strike crippled the economy of Nicaragua for a fortnight, Fidel Castro-supported Sandinista guerrillas based in neighboring Costa Rica believed the moment had come for a major strike.

Some 100 guerrillas moved across the border, overran a small border post at Penas Blancas, moved north through the town of Rivas and finally made it into the city of Grenada. The rebels hoped to set up a "provisional government" led by three exile politicians. Then they planned to call for world recognition.

It didn't quite work out that way. The National Guard — Nicaragua's U.S.-trained army — reacted quickly. In a Viet Nam-type operation troops swept in aboard helicopters and transport planes. They soon decimated the guerrillas: killing or capturing most, sending the rest fleeing back to sanctuary in Costa Rica. The guerrilla operation was over — the only government in Nicaragua was still

that of West Point-trained President Anastasio Somoza.

Somoza's son "Tachito" also received training in the United States, and today he heads an infantry school which is re-training the Guard in groups of about 800 men each.

The Guard stood firmly behind President Somoza during the strike and guerrilla attack. As a result, the United States, which had been cool to Somoza and had cut off arms aid, decided maybe this was the wrong policy. A strong Communist presence had become evident during the strike. If Somoza and the Guard were to go, what would come? A Communist regime a la Castro? Washington decided that this was a real risk, and that maybe Somoza wasn't so bad after all. (The National Guard had showed real restraint during the troubles — no repression, not even censorship of the opposition press.)

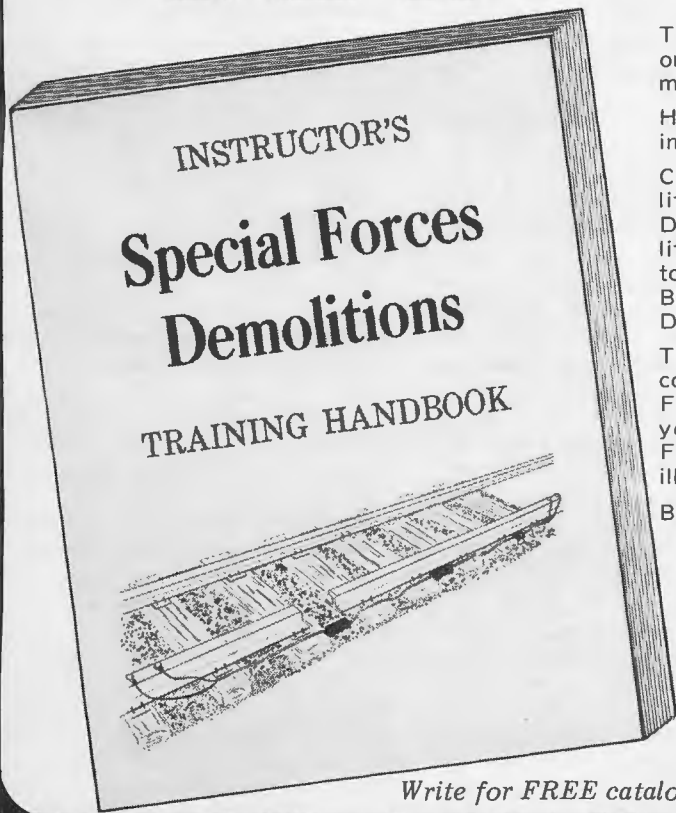
The struggle between Fidel Castro and Anastasio Somoza has gone on for nineteen years. Somoza is more than holding his own.

IN MEMORIAM

On February 15, 1978, Rep. Robert K. Dornan (Calif.) read a memorial tribute to George W. Bacon III into the *Congressional Record*. Before his death, Bacon was African correspondent for SOF and the author of "The Challenge of Deep

(continued on page 68)

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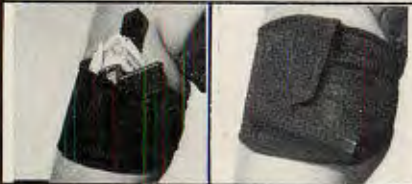
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COMBAT PISTOL CRAFT

Dan Predovich



The cradle of combat shooting is Southern California, home of the South West Pistol League. While in Los Angeles last year for a six-week law enforcement school, I had the pleasure of shooting with some of the finest of the S.W.P.L. competitors at Wes Thompson's range, several miles northwest of L.A. Ray Chapman, Bill French, Larry Grey, Ron Lerch, Irv Stone, Bill and Marge Kehoe were a few of the sportsmen (and sportswomen) who showed what hospitality in the shooting world is all about.

My visit to the "City of Angels" took place while my fellow members of the Colorado Pistol League were busily gettin'-it-together for the 1977 I.P.S.C. National Championship Match, held in Denver during the first week of June. My scheduled return to the Mile High City was the day before my turn to shoot in the Nationals, so I was naturally in a dither, trying to find a place to practice on my free weekends. To make a long story short, Ray Chapman extended an invitation to me to work out at his range and, of course, I jumped at the offer.

Now Ray is a fella who doesn't like mistakes—especially yours. When you shoot on his range, it's all business. If you screw up, he will melt your shooting glasses with his "You stupid -----!" stare. If you forget to punch the stop watch while timing one of his smooth shooting sequences, he may not-so-politely ask you to pull your head out of the sand. I think you get the idea. Well, anyway, that's Ray.

As I neared "short time" and the Nationals loomed closer than I liked, Ray, Larry Grey, and I stepped out to one of the nearby steak-and-ale establishments to sample some of the local beef. As most of their friends know, both Ray and Larry are teetotalers, but after some smooth talking, I was able to convince them that a couple of scotch and waters would enhance the flavor of the steak. Thus plied with drink, Ray solemnly revealed the secret of his shooting success: "Sight picture, trigger squeeze and breath control. . . ."

Ray began practical pistol shooting, aka combat shooting, in 1958. His first exposure to combat shooting was a "Leatherslap" at Jeff Cooper's place in

Big Bear, California. Ray liked that type of competition and became deeply involved in the new sport.

Ray developed quickly into a top competitor. His natural attention to detail, ability to concentrate, and marksmanship abilities carried him to the top of the heap. As practical pistol shooting spread worldwide, each major match became that much more important until, in 1975, he won the World Practical Pistol Championship. Ray's impressive shooting background led me to this interview about his theories concerning combat pistol craft.

According to Ray, "good, basic marksmanship habits are the things that a person should work on from the very first shot that they fire." Speed will come, but it shouldn't be hurried at the expense of good shooting habits.

After you have become a good basic marksman, then you move to Phase II, where you learn to maintain basic habits under all of the various shooting conditions of practical shooting. "It doesn't do you any good to shoot fast if you can't hit," it doesn't do you much more good to hit if you can't do it fairly fast.

On the subject of weapon modification, Ray says, "The minimum modifications that you should have on a combat pistol are few. First of all, the weapon should be capable of six-inch groups at 50 yards. If your weapon can achieve this, then it is sufficiently accurate for practical pistol shooting. Next is a good, crisp trigger pull, somewhere in the neighborhood of 3½ to four pounds. The next most important thing on the pistol is a good visible set of sights." Ray feels that these basic modifications put you in the ball game. Anything else will give the shooter varying degrees of a "competitive edge."

Ray now wears a crossdraw holster for competition. When asked about this change from the straight draw holster, he responded, "The type of draw itself does not really make any difference. Practical pistol shooting is not really a fast-draw contest, you are merely using good equipment to get the pistol out into your hands fairly quickly so that you can get the pistol into action. The reason that I use the crossdraw is not that it is any faster, but more reliable for



Ray Chapman, left, and Fred Sadowski, right, check out Sadowski-customized Colt Commander between matches at 1977 I.P.S.C. National Championships. obtaining a good quick grip on the weapon. The I.P.S.C. clasped hand starting position also influences my choice in favor of the crossdraw."

My next column will contain the balance of my interview with Ray Chapman, covering Ray's practice methods, his views on I.P.S.C. and the direction of practical pistol shooting in general.

* * * * *

Fred Sadowski of the "300" Gunshop, 4655 Washington, Denver, Colorado, has, in varying degrees, customized or modified nearly a dozen revolvers for me over the past several years. He is widely known for his double action work on Colt's Python for police "combat" matches.

Fred, a fine shot in his own right, has a talent for fine tuning revolvers, but until last year, he had not worked extensively on the .45 Colt semi-auto. At the 1977 I.P.S.C. National Championship held in Denver, Fred handed me a Colt Commander that he had worked up, complete with a low profile Bo-Mar rear sight and a light, very crisp trigger.

Unlike a lot of gunsmiths, who use a standard jig to work on the innards of the .45, Fred hones the sear and hammer as they fit in the weapon. According to Fred, tolerances in various samples of the Mark IV, Commander, Commercial, and G.I. weapons are so varied that a jig doesn't do any of them justice. From sampling his work, I'm convinced that he's right.

I have a battery of .45s made up by as many gunsmiths. (Hoag, Behlert, Chow, Clark are the most widely known of my customizers.) The workmanship on all are excellent and, of course, each has his own particular special talent, but Sadowski's trigger work is the best I've found to date!

* * * * *

Q: Combat pistol craft, a subject of deep interest to me, seems to be neglecting a matter that I believe to be of extreme importance to the pistolero with serious thoughts on survival. In fact, it is discussed very little at all. The art

of pistol shooting has become advanced and incorporates a versatility of tactical situations in the various shooting contests held throughout the world. However, it has failed to consider the increasing probability of confronting an armored adversary. This, to me, is a lack of vision on the part of its organizers.

Allow me to elucidate a bit. The U.S. military has been using body armor since the Korean Conflict. Police departments are being equipped with it throughout the nation. Surplus military flak vests have been sold to the public in quantity and there are something like a dozen manufacturers of them in this country. It is only a matter of time until there is proliferation of soft cloth armor. The idea that armor is restricted to law enforcement and the military is ludicrous. Even if it were, who knows when the police and military may become the principle adversaries in future attempts by the government to exert repressive controls over the population? Soft body armor is relatively cheap, simple to manufacture, and is available in quantity. It should become the possession of every knowledgeable person who is interested in survival.

In view of these facts, one must make a serious deduction concerning handguns. Of what value is a pistol that does not fire ammunition that will perforate body armor? The usual answer to this question is: "Shoot them in the head." In real combat and at a distance this becomes the proverbial: "Easier said than done." While a head shot, in most instances, would kill or incapacitate an adversary, the excitement of combat could cause one to empty his/her weapon reflexively at the armored torso area. (Ref: *The Dillinger Days* by John Toland, p. 167.) It is therefore more practical to have ammunition that will perforate body armor. Alternatively, training and competition could emphasize body armor situations. For example: Upon recognition of an armored assailant, one would have to decide where to shoot, according to the type or types of ammunition he/she had at their disposal.

(continued on page 71)

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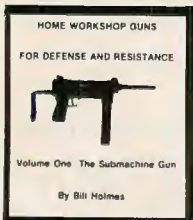
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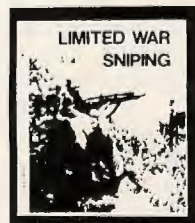


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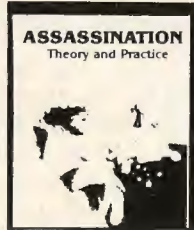
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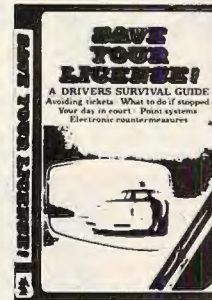
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Work Continues on XM235 Squad Automatic Weapon (SAW)

The U.S. Army has awarded an advanced development contract on the SAW to Ford Aerospace and Communications Corporation, Aeronautics Division, to the tune of \$2,056,249! It should be obvious that the Army is getting quite serious about the weapon! In addition to producing the weapon itself, Ford is also to produce spare parts for it.

According to the Army, the SAW "... is intended to replace the M16A1 rifle in the automatic rifle mode and may replace one or more M60 LMGs in the rifle platoon." It seems to me that I heard the same kind of placating double talk prior to the adoption of the M16. The Army then dumped the superb 7.62mm M14 in favor of the 5.56mm M16, reversing itself after having forced NATO eight years or so earlier to accept the 7.62mm round for its superior stopping power over the smaller caliber cartridges submitted by the British.

I would not be surprised if the Army totally replaced the 7.62mm M60 LMG, which is the finest LMG now in service anywhere in the world, with the new 5.56mm XM235. It would be done, naturally, in the interest of ammunition continuity. Unfortunately, the fact that the 5.56mm round lacks stopping power, range, and long range accuracy doesn't seem to enter the picture at all for some reason! I only hope that someone up there hasn't lost sight of the reasons why we need MGs in the first place and is representing the best interests of the infantryman.

The XM 235 is said to feature 40% less parts than the M60 and weigh less than 21 lbs., loaded with 200 rds. of 5.56mm linked ammunition in a plastic assault box attached to the left side of the weapon's receiver. It is also said to cost half as much to produce as the M60, which weighs 23 lbs. empty.

The Army also claims it has developed a new improved 5.56mm round which will make up for the deficiencies of the standard M193 5.56mm ball round. Designated the XM777, the new cartridge is said to feature a steel penetrator insert inside the bullet which gives the new round a 50% greater penetration of a G.I. steel helmet (one side only). In addition, a trajectory matching tracer round, the XM778, is also under development.

Should One Load Full Capacity in Magazines?

It was common policy while I was a member of the U.S. Army in Southeast Asia, to recommend to the troops to only load 18 rds. of 5.56mm ammo in their 20-rd. M16 magazines. The reason for this doctrine, we were told, was to increase reliability by reducing the possibilities of the magazine follower spring "taking a set."

Although I abided by the "unwritten law" for a while, I soon became uneasy about carrying magazines that shouldn't be loaded to full capacity in order to be reliable, if Army policy was correct! Hell, if a product that is going to be carried by troops in combat can't function properly in the mode for which it was designed, it should never be issued in the first place, right?

In addition to feeling uncomfortable with the doubt that my mags wouldn't reliably function when fully loaded, I realized that I was also shortchanging myself to the tune of 40 rounds of ammo, since I carried 20 20-shot mags for my CAR-15 (XM177E2). That was two whole magazines of ammo I could have with little more weight than I was already carrying, since I was carrying the mags anyway!

Logically, I just couldn't bring myself to believe that the U.S. Army would adopt magazines that had to be sub-loaded to insure feeding reliability, so I began loading the full 20 rounds in my mags. After all, I stripped and cleaned my magazines every time I cleaned my weapon anyway!

I discovered that the 20-rd. mags, and the later 30-rd. type were perfectly reliable when loaded to capacity. This also applies to the magazines of every other military small arm that currently exists. I have tested the M3 "Greasegun" mag, the Thompson mag, the FAL mag, the G3 mag, the Browning 9mm P35 mag, the Colt M1911 .45 auto mag, the Soviet TT33 mag, AK mag, PPSH41 mag and PPS43 mag in this respect and found that, without exception, all function perfectly well when loaded to full capacity. I even left several fully loaded mags around on the back porch for over 30 days, and left a 30 rd. Ingram M10 mag, fully loaded, out in the woods for over a month. The result was that they all functioned nor-



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mally, even the Ingram mag which had been exposed to several rain showers and 5 inches of snow!

It is definitely true that one always runs the risk of his mag springs taking a set, but loading the magazine to sub-standard capacity does not alleviate this danger. All you can do is periodically inspect, clean, and replace magazines if necessary. Like the weapons for which they were designed, magazines will do exactly what they are intended to do, as long as the operator/owner performs the maintenance required, just like any other machine.

So, if you have been loading your magazines with less ammo than they are designed to carry, stop carrying less ammo with almost the same weight. Load those mags to capacity and periodically inspect them for dents, bent feed lips, corrosion, and dirt. These are the things that cause feeding problems, *not* ammunition capacity. If your mags are to remain loaded for longer periods of time, be sure to swap them out with empty fresh ones every month or so, to insure that your springs do not set from being compressed for long periods of time. Pay particular attention to the length of the springs when you pull them out of the magazine body. The first, most obvious sign of a spring taking a set is when it appears shorter than normal. Whenever you find one like this, toss it and replace it with a good spring immediately! It's your life!!!

Clarification on Mg's Eligible for Individual Ownership in the U.S.

I've received a fairly large quantity of mail from readers asking where they can purchase Carl Gustav M45/45B "Swedish Ks," Uzis, Heckler & Koch MP5s, FN/FALs, and other weapons of current non-U.S. manufacture.

Unfortunately, I must advise readers that very few of these weapons were in the country prior to GCA-68 and therefore most are not eligible for individual ownership.

In the case of the Uzi and FAL, they were imported in small quantities into the United States before the Act. Consequently they are eligible for citizens to own. However, since the Class 3 market is one of totally unrestricted supply and demand, as far as prices go, a specimen of either will cost you as much as \$3500.00, if you can find one for sale! Post GCA-68 era weapons like the MP5 are restricted to dealer/military/police ownership by law and, even at that, I know of very few of these.

So, if you had your heart (and wallet) set on a new MP5, it looks like you lose!
Is the Detachable Magazine Really Better?

Over the years, the military entities of the world have, without exception, gone to the 20- or 30-shot, detachable box-type magazine for use with their battle rifles. I won't argue the fact that in-

creased firepower is a wonderful boon to the infantryman, and is therefore desirable, as is the detachable magazine. It would be silly to use a non-detachable, large capacity mag., but some folks seem to have developed the opinion that, because of this fact, the older rifles have somehow lost their tactical efficiency.

An excellent example of this is the cal. .30 M1 Garand. I recently became embroiled in a discussion with a knowledgeable gentleman who was of the opinion that, because the newer M14 possessed a detachable 20-shot magazine, the M1 was now worthless!

I can't agree, because the M1 has more than proved its worth on the battlefields of the world, and, in fact, continues to be found from the jungles of Central America to the shores of the Indian Ocean!

Let's take a short look at the issue. While it's true that the M1 does not use a large capacity magazine, utilizing instead an eight-round clip, this feature does possess several advantages.

First, it does not snag on vegetation because it has no protrusions. Second, since it disposes of the empty clips after the last round is fired, the soldier does not have to worry about loading magazines, defective magazines, or grit in the magazine well causing problems in reloading a fresh magazine into the rifle.

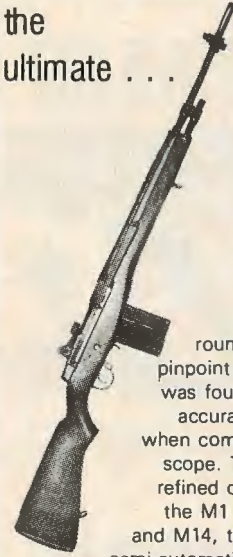
I also witnessed an interesting demonstration of reloading speed with the M1. Time and time again, a semi-skilled operator was able to reload his Garand faster than an equally skilled operator could load magazines into his M14! Placed in its proper context, it is true that the man with the M1 will have to load three times for each 20-rd. mag in the M14. This is an obviously important fact. However, another interesting principle comes into play at this point. **The man with the M1, knowing he has less magazine capacity, tends to pick his shots and execute them more carefully than the man with a large-capacity magazine!** From a logistical standpoint, this feature is critically important.

Now, I'm not saying that the M1 is a better rifle than the M14. What I am saying is that because a weapons system is old, it isn't worthless. Thinking so is rather stupid and can quite easily get one killed in a fight.

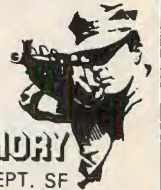
Always remember never to become arrogant in your attitudes about weapons. There are countless stories of phenomenal damage inflicted on targets by G.I. fire-teams armed with M1 rifles during WW2 and Korea. If they could do it then, they can do it now! Keep things in their proper perspective as a matter of normal consequence, if you want to stay alive on the battlefield.

You naturally have every right to your own opinions and philosophies, but you owe it to yourself to make certain that those opinions are based on a realistic appraisal of the facts. If they are not, the

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guerrilla armed with that "worthless" M1 Garand will be the one telling his children about the time he nailed you! You, on the other hand, will be coming home in a rubber bag! Uncomfortable thought, isn't it?

Be smart. Never become wrapped up in the academics of weapons systems. Look at the subject objectively and realistically. You've only got one life.

SOF Reader Speaks Out

I recently received the following letter from a reader in regard to Stopping Power Ratings of rifle cartridges:

Dear SOF:

I am no expert on firearms and ballistics; however, I have noticed a void in the area of rifle ammunition and relative stopping power. This void came to light when I read two articles.

"Blue Shirts and Bolos," by Pat Rogers, *Guns & Ammo*, Sept., '77, told how the Colt M1911 was adopted by the Army. This article had a brief description of the hand gun trials conducted by the U.S. Army in 1891 and in 1904. The 1891 trials led to the adoption of the Colt .38 Double Action Revolver. During the Philippine Insurrection, this revolver proved to be inadequate. This led to the 1904 trials and the adoption of the Colt .45 Automatic. Thirty years later, General Julian Hatcher studied the results of the 1904 trials and developed his formula for Relative Stopping Power (RSP).

"The M-16: Terror or Toy?" by Chuck Taylor, *SOF*, Sept., '77, revealed that controversy still surrounds the M-16. I also remember reading about another trial conducted by the U.S. Army at the turn of the century. The conclusions of this trial were the rifles of .25-.30 caliber be considered for adoption by the Army.

I believe that SOF should sponsor a similar trial, testing different rifle cartridges for their accuracy, brush-bucking ability, penetration, and other criteria deemed necessary. The results

should be used to develop an RSP formula for rifles similar to Gen. Hatcher's formula for pistols. The formula should be based on the bullet's momentum, its cross sectional area, and a factor determined by the bullet's weight and construction. These trials should help determine the smallest acceptable cartridge for any given application.

Sincerely,

William L. Southward

Marion, Ohio

Southward appears to be a rational, intelligent individual, and his thoughts have a great deal of credence. I would be interested in hearing from our readers on this particular subject.

If reader demand is sufficient, I see no reason why SOF cannot conduct such trials. Let's hear from you.

EXCELLENT New Product for Military Weapon's Touch-Up Now Available

Lock, Stock, & Barrel, P.O. Box 3102, Granada Hills, CA 91344, provided me with some of their military-type, touch-up finish, **MG COAT**, several months ago for evaluation. I refrained from reporting the results of the evaluation until now, because I wanted to see how well the product lasted after it has been on the test weapon for a while.

I'm happy to report that **MG COAT**, which retails for \$6.50, applied in the proper manner, as prescribed on the can, wears, looks, and feels exactly like the parkerized finish it duplicates. The finish is dark gray in color, exactly like the finish on the U.S. M-16A1 rifle, and Ingram SMGs.

Again, Lock, Stock and Barrel has come up with a useful, reasonably priced product. If your MG or military finished weapon is starting to get a bit bright on the corners or edges, you can use this particular item.



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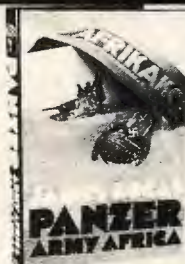


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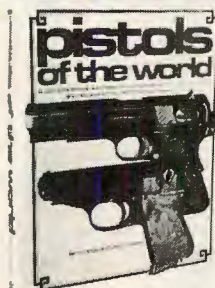


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STEELE ON KNIVES & KNIFE FIGHTING

The scene is a schoolyard in Watts. Two high school boys get into a fight. The larger one knocks down the smaller and begins to beat him with fists and feet. A small crowd gathers. One of the boys in the crowd passes a knife to the boy on the ground. He takes the knife and stabs two inches into the leg of his assailant. The larger boy retreats, limping off the school grounds. The crowd disperses.

Scenes like this are played out in schools and neighborhoods across the country. The reasons are simple. If a boy belongs to a gang, he uses a weapon to balance the weapons of opposing gangs. If a boy is smaller than his opponent, perhaps because he has matured later (many of these incidents occur in junior high schools where students are in different stages of puberty), he may use a weapon to compensate for size in single combat. These two reasons account for about 90% of weapons' use in the schools. The weapon chosen is usually related to what is available; knives and guns are the most common. The problem is not the weapons themselves, but the lack of judgment exercised by youths in their use.

If as many assaults and batteries occurred on a city street as occur daily on school grounds there would be two policemen on every block. It is the constant impulsive fist fighting (not to mention "lunch-money extortion" and other school games) in addition to a certain amount of spillover from off-campus gang rivalries which has led to an escalation of violence in schools. Some parents, faculty, and civil libertarians oppose security officers or police on high school campuses, but there is no doubt that the

level of everyday violence would drop if there were more full-time peacekeepers in the schools.

In the example given above (an actual incident) the boy on the ground used what most would consider a reasonable amount of force to deter his attacker. If the rules of evidence in juvenile hearings were the same as those in adult courts, he could probably demonstrate self-defense because a) he was not carrying the knife himself in a premeditated readiness for violence, b) he did not use the knife until he was in danger of serious injury, c) he used the knife on a non-vital target, indicating a desire to do as little damage as possible, just enough to deflect the attack, and d) he did not continue using the knife once his opponent had disengaged.

However, most youths do not have the maturity or self-control to use *weapons* in this precision manner. Newspapers are full of accounts of fatal stabbings and shootings under similar circumstances. It is for this reason that States have made such stringent laws against carrying weapons on school grounds. For example, California, in addition to making it a felony for anyone to carry concealed a "dagger, stiletto, or dirk," has also made it a misdemeanor to even possess such weapons on school property. California has also made it a misdemeanor to possess a push-button knife with a blade longer than two inches or to possess on school property any lock-blade knife, unguarded razor, or any knife with blade longer than 3½ inches. It is an additional misdemeanor to threaten or fight with any knife.



Small, but highly lethal, boot knife by Jody Samson, shown after attachment of micarta handles (six-pin construction with thumb hole). This minimum-size boot knife, with the finger groove serving in place of a quillon, is one of the slickest designs author has ever seen.

Knife fighting in this country is mainly reserved for teenagers. For most youths, guns are more difficult to obtain and more difficult to conceal.

Because of concealment problems, the typical street knife is a folder with blade length of four inches or less. However, there are exceptions to this rule. Some "biker" gangs in California prefer to buy a large sheath knife and display it on their handlebars as a message to rival gang members to "be careful." Obviously, the bigger the knife the greater the deterrent effect.

Much knife use by youthful criminals cannot be classified knife fighting. For example, a pair of youths recently stabbed a woman twice in the stomach in order to steal her purse. By the same token, when a soldier stabs an enemy sentry from behind this cannot be considered knife fighting in the strict sense of the word. Likewise, the military use of a knife to "interrogate" suspected insurgents cannot be classified as knife fighting.

"Fighting" requires that opponents be face to face and of approximately equal skills and weapons. For example, two men (or youths) squared off with short knife against large physique, knife against knife, knife against machete, knife against club, knife against pistol (at contact distance) could be said to be fighting.

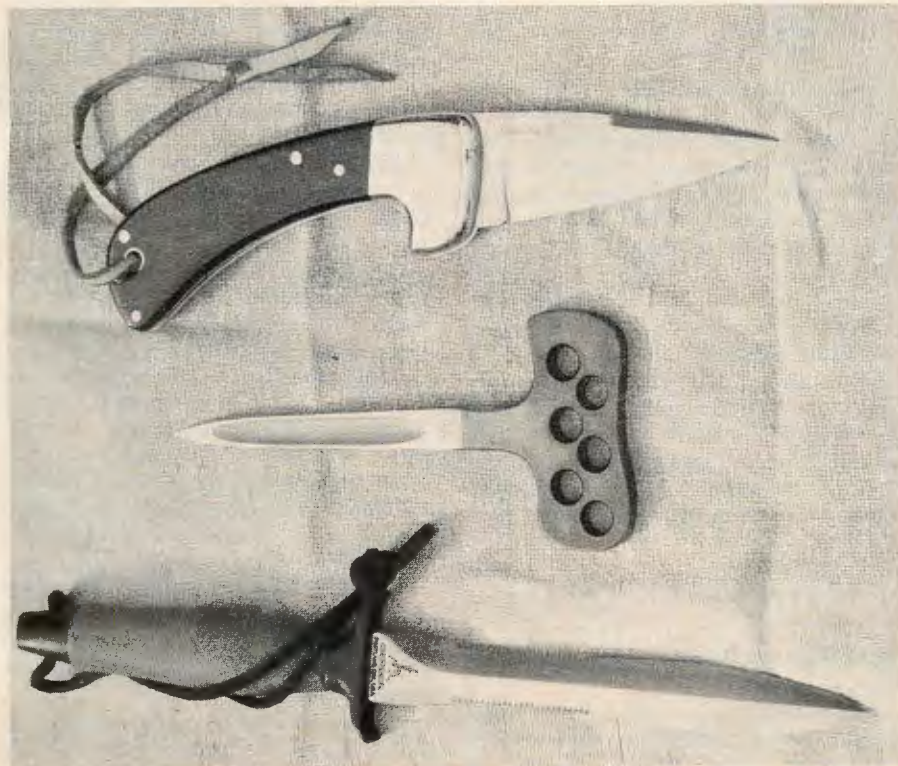
The classic form of knife fighting is the knife against knife. Among juveniles this may be a fight to "first blood." Two boys may decide that "honor" requires that they fight with knives but

just for "nicks, no sticks." The most highly developed form of first blood duels were the sabre duels in German universities (such as Heidelberg). Fraternities would organize contests which involved use of the *schlaeger*, a modified fencing sabre sharpened at the end but with no point. Opponents were well padded; only the cheeks were exposed to attack. Opponents were required to stand straight a fixed distance apart so that only the last six inches of blade could reach the face. Matches might require a fixed number of exchanges, such as 24 cuts, or a fixed time limit, such as 14 minutes. Iron goggles protected the eyes and nose, but the cheeks might receive several cuts (called a *schmiss* or duelling scar) during these exchanges.

Needless to say, these fencing matches might involve quite a bit of pain and endurance, but, except for the danger of blood poisoning, they were about as safe as duelling will ever be. Unfortunately, first blood knife duels are not so regulated and may easily get out of hand. There is no guarantee that both individuals will have enough self control to restrict themselves to minor cuts to the extremities.

The second type of knife fighting is the fight to disablement. Both fighters continue until one can no longer defend himself. A fellow from Afghanistan once told me about witnessing two boys exchange knife blows to each other's shoulders (one at a time) until one could no

(continued on page 75)



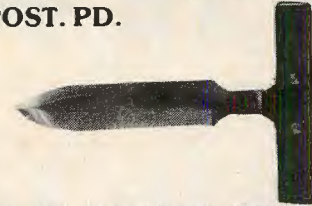
Top: "Odin's Claw" folding fighting knife designed by E.G. Brooker of Cincinnati and made by Wayne Goddard of Eugene, Oregon. Middle: A tricorner push dagger with solid, contoured grip made by Wayne Goddard. Bottom: Classic Gerber Mark II survival knife.

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FLAK



M.P.L.A. SUPPORTER . . .

Dear Sir:
On the politics of mercenary war in southern Africa, surely you must know that the African struggle is . . . far more complicated than you seem to paint it.

Far from simply fighting "the same enemy we fought in Korea and Vietnam," the F.N.L.A., for which Danny Gearhart fought and died in Angola was/is a force *strongly supported* by "Red" China, the West's main *antagonist* in Korea and a key opponent in Vietnam!

The matter is far more complex: Angola and Africa generally have had the misfortune to be trapped in the sordid big-power politics of the continuing Cold War.

At the same time I should like you to know that not all of your political (and potential military) opponents are typically "heartless Red devils."

There are some of us—I know I am not alone—who indeed otherwise supported and still support the M.P.L.A. government of Angola, and now support the "Zimbabwe" forces in Rhodesia, who nonetheless viewed the mercenaries' trial and execution as glaring, patent, indefensible and criminal *atrocities*.

I can only emphasize and re-emphasize a continuous, unbroken, long-standing *horror* at this kind of conduct, which has all too often marred the best efforts of *all* sides in this century's vicious ideological wars, despite the adamant and anguished opposition of all honorable combatants. . . .

Yours for the Geneva Conventions, at least,
Robert H. Ross
New York, New York

THUMBS DOWN . . .

Dear Mr. Brown:

Your March '78 issue really hit an all-time low with the article, "Bounty Hunting in Africa—Pros at Work," you say, no less. Are those guys supposed to be really cool or what? Degrading the locals, parading around in Hustler t-shirts—yeah, those guys are really squared away. (You can tell just by looking at these guys that they're a bunch of assholes.)

Apparently, these guys didn't learn anything in Vietnam. I suggest you send them copies of *The Ugly American* so they can get acquainted with themselves. Why not try to keep this trash out of your magazine? I thought your cover had the word "professional" on it.

Your Friend,
D. Mete
Port Carbon, Pennsylvania

KUDOS AND QUERY . . .

Sirs:

Congratulations on your May '78 cover, but I think that we will all miss the old *Time* magazine style "red border."

Jeff Cooper did it again with his essay, "Rhodesia Unbowed." Has to be the very best essay I've ever read since "The Deadly Americans" (Fall '76). Lt. Col. Cooper not only shoots from the hip, but he hits the target.

Thanks for another great issue of SOF,
Bill Mann
Lubbock, Texas

WE STAND CORRECTED . . .

Dear Sirs:

I have finished reading (or rather re-reading) your January '78 issue. I must commend you on an excellent magazine. However, I must correct you on one point. You state in "Full Auto" that the XM177E2/Car. is no longer in the U.S. military inventory. This is not true. The U.S.A.F. still uses it under classification XM177E2/GAV. I know this for a fact, being an ex-Air Force Security Specialist and SPECS mobility troop in NKP, Thailand. The U.S.A.F. K-9 units use this as their standard weapon. It is still used and still treasured by the SPs that use them. Other than that your magazine is the best.

Sincerely,
Lee A. Rini
U.S.N.

BLACKS AREN'T BIG GAME . . .

Dear Mr. Earp:

I know that you won't be decent enough to answer my letter, but your article, "Pros at Work: Bounty Hunting in Africa," struck a malevolent chord in my soul. It figures that American whites would find the ultimate joy in hunting,

waylaying, and slaughtering Blacks as if they were BIG GAME. If they enjoy murdering that much, why don't they form a vigilante group and track down the hard core criminals that plague their own cities? Then they would be doing a great service to their fellow Americans.

Not too long ago, whites here practiced the same inhumanities towards Indians and Blacks. Now that we can fight back, they go overseas to get their kicks.

WILL IT EVER END?

Sincerely,
Sylvia Brown
Yonkers, New York

Wyatt Earp Jr. replies:

Ms Brown — Thank you for your letter indicating your concern over what you felt was "Big Game" hunting by white racists. Apparently, you did not read the article in depth, since you missed the point that the fighting is between armed rustlers and terrorists (whose targets are usually black Africans) and personnel hired to protect the ranches and their African workers. Most of the security teams have black members, although the one pictured did not. The men mentioned in the article were welcomed with open arms at every village they went to, because they were seen as protectors by the village.

In one village the author went to in which rustlers were thought to have passed by, the entire security team laid their rifles down in order not to intimidate anyone and they enjoyed a smoke break with the villagers. Tribal customs were strictly observed as the team leader spoke to the elders of the village, asking for information. The information was freely given and the team (with six whites and three blacks—if you are interested in the racial aspect of the unit) departed on their chase.

This was typical of what the author saw during operations in the security field. As was mentioned in the article, the vast majority of information was volunteered by local villagers to security teams. Criminals are criminals regardless of the color of their skins, and the ones who suffer most are the hard-working and law-abiding citizens. The majority of black Rhodesian citizens decry the violent techniques used by two "nationalist" movements based in Zambia and Mozambique, preferring the options of constitutional government offered by the other three major groups which promise free elections when they take over. Therefore, the two violent groups feel compelled to direct their terrorist tactics against the people of the villages who do not care for them or their methods.

Your comments on vigilante groups in the U.S. to take care of problems the courts seem no longer able to handle may have merit. We sincerely hope that you are one of the members of your community who is taking active steps to

encourage your fellow citizens to fight crime, no matter what the color of the perpetrator's skin.

CROSS BOW COMPLAINT . . .

Dear Sirs:

We refer to the advertisement for Barnett crossbows which appeared in the May 1978 issue of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine.

This advertisement was placed by Horizon Industries, and we wish to state publicly that we disapprove of the advertising theme.

Our crossbows are manufactured for the purposes of hunting and target shooting, and not for military purposes.

. . . We attest to your readers that B. & P. Barnett (Canada) Limited, neither endorses, nor condones, advertising which depicts the taking of human life with our products.

Yours sincerely,
David E. Morrison, President
B. & P. Barnett (Canada) Ltd.
London, Ontario
Canada

VIETNAM LEGION

Dear Mr. Reisinger:

As you may have gathered, I am interested in contacting Vietnam veterans of all nations. I believe we have somewhat unique experiences, both in the service and after.

I served with 12 field regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, as an armorer, gun-fitter during 1971 in Phuc Touy, Saigon and Vung Tau as well as various F.S.B.s around the Province.

Since our return, we have formed a social and welfare club called "Vietnam Legion." I have enclosed a car sticker. Our marching Banner is the same, with the words "LEST WE FORGET" across the D.M.Z. . . .

Please find a copy of our ideals and I hope we are in agreement:

THE VIETNAM LEGION

Designed strictly for veterans of the Vietnam campaign. If you spent even one day in Vietnam you are eligible to join.

Our aims are:

(a) To encourage among members a spirit of loyalty to the Crown and Commonwealth of Australia and to perpetrate a sense of Comradeship within the community, such as was attained in the Australian armed services during the Vietnam Campaign.

(b) To grant financial or other assistance to members of the association in special cases of distress and/or their widows, children, orphans or relations of those members or their widows, children or relations of any other person as may be determined by the Committee.

(c) To participate, as a representative body of the Vietnam Campaign, in Remembrance Services and other such Memorial services that may be held.

(continued on page 68)

THIS BOOK PREPARES YOU FOR TERRORISM, FOOD SHORTAGES, MONETARY COLLAPSE, A DICTATORSHIP, AND GUN CONFISCATION!!!

TIMELY AND PROFITABLE HELP FOR TROUBLED AMERICANS hits the bull's-eye! In it survival expert Hans J. Schneider reveals his proven plan for YOUR freedom and survival in the midst of economic and civil turmoil.

An extraordinary life uniquely qualified Hans to write it **JUST FOR TIMES LIKE THESE!** He endured much physical suffering and privation under two dictatorships, including 5 years under Communism. As his country struggled through another economic and political crash, a serious illness almost took his life. His father, a former industrialist, lost about \$10 million overnight, was imprisoned and told that he would be shot the next day.

As thousands of a disarmed populace were murdered, conditions were so severe that they had to arrive at ingenious ways to survive, and solve food and clothing problems . . . let Mr. Schneider tell you about it.

Having survived terribly adverse circumstances many times, he knows first hand what worked and what did not. Why endure like hardships if you can learn from a man of such caliber? This invaluable knowledge will help you in similar times ahead.

Chapter 19, "Emergency Short-Term Survival," alone can save the lives of you and your loved ones. It is a crash course in the most essential areas if time is of the essence and things are caving in around you. In it the author gives you the best and most comprehensive food test derived from his own experience and in-depth research of various survival manuals. Also included is an abbreviated version taken from the Air Force Survival Manual. Knowledge of these tests is a MUST. The same lifesaving chapter will show you what to do when you get lost in the wild country, or if you were relocated from where you NOW live, and how to provide almost instant shelter and heat. You will receive vital information on survival hunting, unusual remedies, first aid, and orientation. Lists of survival manuals and essential items for the survival kit (most of which can be obtained locally and easily carried with you in times of emergency) are included.

- Now discover how you can:
- * Beat inflation and depression.
 - * Protect and increase your savings by proper investments.
 - * Choose an exciting occupation least vulnerable to unemployment.
 - * Succeed in your own business.
 - * Make money, cut expenses, save time.
 - * Get out of the rat race.
 - * Live simply for LESS and enjoy it MORE.
 - * Locate your place of refuge (things to look for, what to avoid).
 - * Be completely independent when energy sources give out by producing your own electricity without gasoline 5 different ways.
 - * Prepare for the coming agricultural woes.
 - * Get in top physical condition with the right type of diet for your geographical location and lifestyle.
 - * Protect yourself from auto repair gimmicks and skyrocketing crime.
 - * Give your children a meaningful, thorough education in 2 hours a day without exposing them to dope, delinquency, racial problems and bad teachings.
- . . . and much, MUCH more.

Dealer inquiries concerning bulk orders invited.



DO YOU KNOW???
What essential provisions to store, and how some can be used for barter? . . . What weed has a tremendous healing action for wounds and sores (page 45)? . . . Which animals are the most productive, economical and easiest to care for? . . . What advantages the Southern Hemisphere has to offer? . . . Why Hitler's on-rushing military might never invaded Switzerland? . . . Why big cities will be places of increased terror in the coming years? . . . What usually follows gun registration? . . . Which investments will be a disaster in the near future? (Believe it or not, but the funds of many Americans are tied up in these.) . . . Why your savings accounts could be wiped out overnight?

Find the answers in 180 different concise sections. You will also read about alternate lifestyles, weaponry, and defense tactics; 7 ways to get out of debt (page 94); 5 ways to identify "shady" businesses; 6 simple, inexpensive ways to preserve your own food (one using just a needle and string! page 47); and what is even more important for your physical survival than merely storing food (see pages 214 and 248-249!).

Are you sick of it all? The rat race, pressures of modern-day living? Do you ever long for independence, your own home in the country with peace and quiet? **THIS IS THE BOOK FOR YOU!**

You'll find out how you can wisely select the right place to live in the stormy times ahead, using the 3 "acid tests," his own unique, proven approach—just like Mr. Schneider did! He lives in a beautiful place situated in the mountains by a spring-fed creek without utility bills, polluted air, chemicalized food, and noise.

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Within its 288 pages, find how you can turn problems into advantages, miseries into happiness, boredom into challenge, and time waste of a merry-go-round existence into a purposeful life.

In short, you'll discover in this book how to live better today and be more prepared for tomorrow.

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You may also wish Mr. Schneider's other unusual book, **MASTERS OF LEGALIZED CONFUSION AND THEIR PUPPETS**, an undisputed eye-opener written without compromise. Both can now be obtained for only \$8.40 (you save \$1.50) by taking advantage of this special offer. Prompt shipment guaranteed.

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Shovel only **\$7⁹⁵**

Cover alone **\$2⁵⁰**

\$3⁹⁵ each
(indicate height)

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Non toxic **95¢**
2 1/2 oz. stick

.223 AMMO PACK

Set has 14 stripper clips, 7 cardboard, 1 guide and a bandoleer

..... **\$1⁹⁵** ea.

10 sets, enough for 1400 rds. **\$15⁰⁰**

G.I. waterproof match box **75¢** ea.
1 qt. capacity plastic canteen **\$1⁰⁰** ea.

FINALLY
A PLACE THAT'S GOT IT ALL IN GENUINE G.I. GOODIES ONLY THE VERY BEST - SENT TO YOU BY FAST UPS SHIPMENT, OFTEN SENT WITHIN 24 HOURS OF RECEIVING YOUR ORDER. JUST PICK UP THE PHONE & DIAL (512) 663-9913 YOU'LL SEE...

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Quality - don't confuse these with the "Cheaper" copies
Shorty barrel kit does not include receiver or stock (sold separately)

- Kit includes everything plus Complete Instructions *
- Pair of Shorty Handguards with Lenses **\$29.95** separately
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- And A Barrel Nut Wrench **\$12.50**

\$99⁹⁵
Complete Footplate

Complete Unit is Only 17 inches Long!

Copy of letter of ATF approval w/each kit
No FFL needed



OLD SARGE

Proud to say that BOTH Shorty & Buttstock are NOW available. Immediate Shipment. Packed as YOU call.

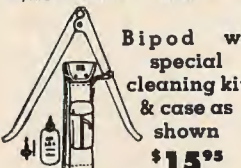
Thanks The Sarge



..THE STOCK..

The Telescoping Stock We Sell is the Only One Duplicating That Rare G.I. Black Plastic Coating Type Finish (No Ugly Paint). Made to G.I. Specs. Complete W/Buffer Assy. & Spring, Checkered Buttplate -

JUST like G.I. **\$62⁵⁰** ea.



Bipod w/ special cleaning kit & case as shown **\$15⁹⁵**

NOTICE:
Last Minute Arrival
Excellent Condition
Italian Camouflage
Fatigues in all sizes -
Bush Jacket type w/
padded knees & elbows.
Set **\$13⁹⁵** jacket & Pants

Essex Steel .45 M1911 A1 Frames
Dealers Best Price **\$30.90** ea.
5 For **\$190.00**
• Remember to Send FFL •

.45 ACP PARTS

Plunger Tube	\$ 2.75
Slide Stop	\$ 4.00
Mag. Catch	\$ 2.50
Ejector	\$ 2.95
Sear Pin	\$.75
Hammer Pin	\$.75
Hammer Strut	\$.90
Recoil Spring	\$.65
Firing Pin Stop	\$ 1.10
NM Long Trigger, Alum. w/stop	\$ 6.95

Many other parts in stock.

COLT MAG SET
3 Colt mfg. mags w/latest nylon LC-1 Pouch.
all NEW **\$24⁹⁵**
Pouch only **\$5⁹⁵**
Colt 30 rd. mags. Separately **\$9⁹⁵**

LATEST G.I. GAS MASKS ACCESSORIES
M-17 Filters-Combat Type
New only **\$3⁵⁰** pr.
M-17 A1 Canteen Caps
New- **\$5⁰⁰** ea.

M-17 or M9 gas mask bags
\$5⁹⁵ New
\$3⁹⁵ Used

! HAS IT ! ALL RIFLE SLINGS

- RS-5007 M14 or M1 Garand. Nylon Late Style **\$2.95** New
- RS-5011 Thompson 1928 or M1A1 .. **\$2.95** New
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Oilier for above **75¢** New
- RS-5002 M1 Garand, Web Canvas .. **\$1.95**

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Price gougers beware! Sarge saw that recent ad with prices more than 2 times his list & decided to run a comparison.
..Sarge also has a quantity of M60 parts Write for Free List

- (1) Asbestos Mittens theirs were over \$17 Our price **\$5⁰⁰** ea. **\$8⁰⁰** pr.
- (2) M-60 Barrel Bag New Vinyl theirs over \$20 Our price **\$7⁹⁵**
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1911 G.I. original Flat Housing Parkerized or Blue **\$5⁹⁵** ea.

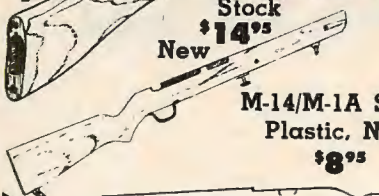
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M-16/AR-15 PARTS

BOLT CARRIER GROUP, FORWARD ASSIST MODEL, NEW PARKERIZED COMP. W/BOLT ASSY., COMP., ETC.	\$29.50
BOLT, NEW, PARKERIZED FINISH, COMPLETE W/EJECTOR, EXTRACTOR, GAS RINGS, ETC.	\$ 7.50
New Black Handguards, Latest Issue, Complete	\$ 4.00
Pair (By Colt Mfg.)	\$ 5.00
Rear Sight Assembly, Complete	\$ 3.00
Ejection Port Cover Assembly	\$ 4.00
Flash Hiders, Bird Cage or Prong, Early Type w/lock washer, New, Your Choice, One.	\$ 4.95
Two	\$ 7.95
GAS TUBES, CHROME BRAND NEW FOR AR-15/M-16, W/PIN	\$ 4.95
SHORTY Handguards w/liners	\$29.95
SHORTY Gas Tubes w/pins	\$12.00
SHORTY Handguard Cap	\$ 3.95
SHORTY Barrel Assembly w/permanently attached flash hider, front sight base, sling swivel, barrel nut.	\$49.95
Barrel Nut Wrench	\$12.50
Stripper Clip Guides, 5 for	\$10.00, or \$ 25
Hammer Pin Retaining Spring	\$.35
Hammer Spring	\$.50
Hammer w/ springs	\$ 7.95
Hammer Pin	\$.25
Trigger Guard Assembly	\$ 1.50
Trigger Spring	\$.50
Trigger w/ springs	\$ 6.95
Trigger Pin	\$.25
Safety/Selector	\$ 0.65
Sear Pin	\$.60
Disconnector	\$ 2.95
Disconnector Spring	\$.35
Magazine Catch, Button, & Spring Set.	\$ 2.00
Takedown Pin	\$ 1.00
Pivot Pin	\$ 1.00
Charging Handle Assembly	\$ 3.00
Recoil Spring Tube	\$ 4.00
Recoil Spring	\$ 2.00
Gas Rings	\$ 5.50
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Extractor Spring	\$.25
Extractor Pin	\$.20
Ejector	\$.50
Ejector Spring	\$.25
Ejector Pin	\$.20
Bolt Carrier w/key	\$22.00
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Safety Selector Detent & Springs	\$.50
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Walnut H & R Leatherneck Stock \$14.95



.50 cal. Browning MG cover New..... \$29.95 complete

XM-177 TYPE HANDGUARDS w/liners \$29.95 caps \$3.95



Send 75¢ for our complete parts listing for 50 cal. BMG. Has excellent blowups, prices, ordering info.



.50 cal. Dummy ea. 90¢ Box of 10 \$7.95

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New w/spare parts in the box \$6.95

Sarge's own. for every guy who takes pride in his .45

Custom .45 Auto ** these beautiful wood grips are Black-lacquered and inlaid with real mother-of-pearl.

New \$11.95 pair

2 styles shown or also available with a dove clutching olive branch

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IT'S EASY

Ordering no longer is a HASSLE THE BEST -- THE FASTEST

24 HOUR SHIPMENT PROMISED

CALL OR WRITE

& get the stuff you need from the fastest place in the business!

OLD SARGE



Why settle for less - When I've got the BEST (512) 663-9913 9 to 6 weekdays

Happiness is a No Hassle Order!

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MP-1021 CIA Style Pouch for Thompson 20 or 30 rd. New \$3.00
MP-1023 CIA Style Pouch for M2, holds 3-30 rd. New \$3.00
MP-1024 M-3 Box Type, holds 8-30, d. Used... \$4.95



MP-1000 Carbine 2-15 rd. pouch \$1.00 new



MP-1007 .45 Auto 2 mag. type \$1.25 new



MP-1011 M16 Canvas, holds 4-20 rd. \$2.95 new

MP-1012 M16 Nylon, holds 4-20 rd. \$4.95 new

MP-1008 M-14 pouch Holds 3-20 rd. used excellent \$2.00 ea.

.45 PLUNGER TUBE STAKING TOOL

Precision tool, Parkerized - a must - \$8.95 ea



Rare M-7 Bayonet for M-16 \$17.50 ea. -includes free sheath-

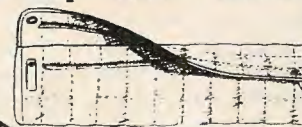
Sheath alone \$1.95



CIVIL DEFENSE

First Aid kit for CD shelters - unbelievable! 95 lbs. of bandages, ointments, tables, instruments, splints - everything! No illegal drugs remain but all else is included. This kit was designed by Uncle to serve 300 men! Perfect for bomb shelters, hideaways or your family.

Huge value. Only \$89.95 sent freight collect



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CAR-15 Perfectly! designed for M-1 Carbine (out of the stock) Perfect for car trunk or storage \$12.50 ea.

G.I. field jacket hoods New - each only \$1.25



Also limited Number w/fur ruff \$6.95

G.I. .45 BLACK Leather Holster New \$6.95 Used \$4.95



G.I. Heavy vinyl pistol bag \$1.25

Fits .38 & .45 and nearly any pistol with 5" barrel or less. Protect your investment in your fine handguns.

M1-A/M-14 PARTS

Magazine, New, 20 Rd.	\$ 3.95	Gas Cylinder Lock	\$ 3.50
Firing Pin	\$ 1.00	Gas Cylinder Lock Screw	\$ 2.95
Extractor	\$ 2.00	Gas Piston	\$ 4.95
Extractor Spring & Plunger	\$ 1.50	Trigger Sear Assembly	\$ 3.50
Flash Hider	\$14.95	Safety Spring	\$ 1.50
Front Sight Screw	\$.75	Operating Rod Guide w/pin	\$ 3.50
Flash Hider Lock Nut	\$ 2.95	Operating Rod Spring	\$ 2.50
Lock Nut Screw (Allen)	\$ 1.00	Blank Adapter w/shield, (New)	\$ 3.50

M-1 GARAND PARTS

Aperture, Rear sight	\$ 1.00	Guide, Bullet	\$ 1.00	Plunger, Hammer spring	\$.75
Arm, Follower	\$ 1.00	Hammer	\$ 2.25	Rod, Follower	\$ 7.50
Band, Lower	\$.75	Housing, Hammer spring	\$ 1.25	Rod, Operating	\$15.00
Base, Rear sight	\$ 1.00	Housing, Trigger	\$ 6.00	Safety	\$ 2.00
Bolt, Complete	\$ 8.00	Knob, Elevating, New style	\$ 1.25	Screw, Buttplate, Long	\$.50
Bolt, Stripped	\$ 6.00	Knob, Windage, New style	\$ 1.25	Screw, Buttplate, Short	\$.25
Catch, Operating Rod, Complete	\$ 2.50	Latch, Clip	\$ 2.50	Screw, Front sight	\$.35
Cover, Rear sight	\$ 1.00	Lock, Gas cylinder	\$ 2.95	Screw, Gas cylinder lock	\$ 2.00
Cylinder, Gas	\$ 5.95	Pin, Clip latch	\$.75	Screw, Stacking swivel	\$.35
Ejector w/spring	\$.75	Pin, Filing	\$ 1.00	Sight, Front	\$ 1.50
Ejector, Clip	\$ 1.00	Pin, Follower arm	\$.25	Spring, Clip latch	\$.50
Extractor	\$ 1.00	Pin, Hammer	\$.30	Spring, Hammer	\$.50
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Femule, Front hand guard	\$.75	Pin, Trigger	\$.25	Swivel, Butt	\$ 1.00
Follower, Complete	\$ 2.50	Plate, Butt assembly	\$ 2.50	Swivel, Stacking	\$ 1.00
Guard, Trigger, Milled	\$ 4.00	Plunger, Extractor w/spring	\$.50	Trigger and Sear Assembly	\$ 2.00
Guard, Trigger, Stamped	\$ 2.00				



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Please don't forget postage! \$1.00 Min.

M-1 CARBINE PARTS & ACCESSORIES

Flash Hider, U.S. G.I.	\$17.50	Buttplate Screw	\$.25
Piston Nut Wrench, G.I.	\$ 2.00	Extractor Spring	\$.50
Mag. Dust Covers	\$1.00 or \$.25	Recoil Spring	\$.50
Blank Adapter, Rare	\$14.95	Trigger Spring	\$.65
Grenade Launcher, includes free sight.	\$19.95	Hammer Spring	\$.65
M-4 Bayonet, New, Parker	\$17.50	Sear Spring	\$.50
Slide, M-1	\$14.00	Slide Stop Spring	\$.75
Slide, M-2	\$19.95	Mag. Catch Spring & Plunger	\$.50
Gas Piston	\$ 1.25	Safety Catch Spring & Plunger	\$.75
Gas Piston Nut	\$ 1.25	Spring Set - All above springs, New	\$ 3.95
Safety, Flip type	\$ 1.25	Firing Pin	\$ 1.25
Special Barrier Bag for Storage	\$.75	Extractor	\$ 2.00
Canvas Muzzle Cover	\$.50	Extractor Plunger	\$ 1.00
30 Rd. Mag., New	\$ 3.95	Ejector Assembly	\$.65
M-7 Bayonet, New, Parker	\$17.50	Trigger	\$ 3.25
Slide, M-1	\$14.00	Hammer	\$ 2.95
Slide, M-2	\$19.95	Hammer Plunger	\$.75
Gas Piston	\$ 1.25	Hammer Pin	\$.50
Gas Piston Nut	\$ 1.25	Sear/Trigger Pin	\$.50
Safety, Flip type	\$ 1.25	Front Sight Pin	\$.25
30 Rd. Mag., New G.I. Solid Back Model	\$ 5.95		
Buttplate	\$ 1.95		

DECENT INTERVAL

BY FRANK SNEPP

A Review

by

Frank J. Idzikowski

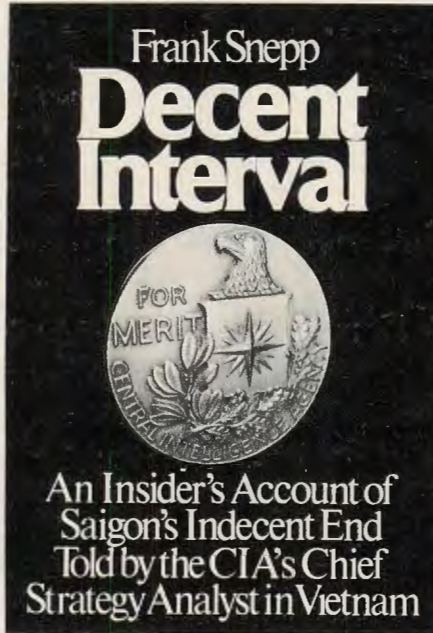
DECENT INTERVAL: An Insider's Account of Saigon's Indecent End Told by the CIA's Chief Strategy Analyst in Vietnam, Frank Snapp. Random House, New York, 590 pages. \$14.95 Review by Frank J. Idzikowski.

The most costly, disastrous and misunderstood intervention in American history came to a tragic end on April 30, 1975, when the Communists marched triumphantly into Saigon, thus deciding South Vietnam's fate. The 150 billion dollars spent by the United States in Vietnam was trivial compared to the lives of 55,000 gallant American soldiers who had died in vain, attempting to save South Vietnam from Communist domination. Numerous Americans decried the fate of the South Vietnamese who had been abandoned, among them a young man who had spent several years in South Vietnam in a position where he had known what was occurring but had been powerless to prevent it.

Frank Snapp was the young, highly motivated chief analyst of North Vietnamese Political Affairs for the CIA. After his departure from Saigon on the day the city fell, he repeatedly attempted to induce the CIA to conduct an in-house investigation of the numerous mistakes that had occurred in Vietnam, especially during the final months of U.S. involvement.

After several rebuffs, Snapp resigned from the Agency and began to write *Decent Interval*, a documentation of his allegations regarding bureaucratic bungling, alteration of his and others' analyses of enemy intentions and capabilities to what Washington wanted to hear, and broken promises to Vietnamese employees of the Embassy, CIA, DAO and other agencies, who had been left behind during the evacuation.

The CIA claims that by writing this book Snapp violated a pledge to the Agency to clear all written material with them prior to publication. Snapp counter-claims that the CIA failed to keep its end of the pledge by leaking out half-truths to the public. Snapp further claims that he



did not "blow" the cover of any agents—the names mentioned in the book were general knowledge—as did others who wrote of the Agency, including Phillip Agee.

The Paris Peace Accords of 1973 were basically a "cop-out" to extricate the

THE SNEPP LAWSUIT: As we go to press, Attorney General Griffin B. Bell has disclosed his intention to sue Frank Snapp, a former CIA employee, for failure to clear with the Agency before publishing a book about Vietnam. Bell did so in casual—and, some lawyers thought, highly unprofessional—answers at a news conference.

Major newspapers reported the news conference remarks but they did not notice when the actual suit was filed the next day, in federal court in Alexandria, Va., and hence they did not report its novel and sweeping legal theories. The department claims all of Snapp's royalties as damages for failing to submit the manuscript, even if his book contains no classified information.

United States from active involvement in the Vietnam War. They did not answer the basic question of who would lead postwar Vietnam, a problem which had led to war 20 years earlier, nor did they answer questions concerning control of territories and replacement of munitions. Finally, the ICCS (International Commission for Control and Supervision) was permitted to arbitrate disputes. However, since final decisions had to be unanimous before anything could be mandated, and since Communist-bloc Poland and Hungary would not vote against their allies, the agreement was completely unworkable. The accords did achieve one major point, that of permitting the United States to withdraw from Vietnam—but at what cost?

As far back as 1971, Frank Snapp had concluded that the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) had a major offensive in the works; however, because of Henry Kissinger's preoccupation with negotiations with Hanoi, he did not believe that they would revert to their old tricks and all analyses contrary to his belief were subsequently modified. Shortly thereafter, the Easter 1972 Offensive caught the Americans "with their pants down."

South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu believed that giving in to Communists in Paris would cause him to "lose face" before his people, an intolerable action to a Vietnamese. He therefore said *no* to four points of negotiation: territorial concessions, political concessions, recognition of the Communist Party, and commercial dealings with the Communists. When Thieu balked at signing the treaty, the U.S. threatened to cut off all aid to South Vietnam and told him to sign it or go it alone. The U.S. further told him that if he failed to sign, they would sign a separate peace with North Vietnam and Saigon would be on its own. Thieu signed reluctantly.

Major problems began building up in late 1974 and early 1975, when numerous NVA attacks struck minor outposts and villages. The war was now being fought almost entirely by North Vietnamese

regulars, since the Vietcong had been all but decimated in 1972.

Thieu had been forced to fight a "poor man's war," since the Americans had withdrawn, due to budget cuts mandated by the U.S. Congress. Although the South Vietnamese had learned to fight as the Americans did—when attacked, use massive air power and artillery support prior to moving in—they were now forced to ration artillery rounds and countless warplanes were grounded for lack of spare parts and the spiralling cost of fuel.

Snepp reports that Pat Johnson, a CIA analyst, wrote an estimate of the problem of South Vietnamese morale, declaring it to be poor. However, CIA station chief Tom Polgar wrote a second report, stating there was no evidence that poor morale had affected ARVN. Although this conclusion was so ludicrous that the CIA in Washington refused to show it to Kissinger, Polgar and U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam Graham Martin declassified and distributed it to newsmen, congressmen, and even the Russians.

Nixon's resignation in 1974 was a major turning point for the North Vietnamese. Hanoi had always feared Nixon's unpredictability, remembering his command to bomb Hanoi and Haiphong at Christmas 1972. When Gerald Ford became President in August 1974, the "hawks" in Hanoi pressed for an immediate attack to see what American response would be.

Phouc Binh was a marginal target in hotly contested Phouc Long Province, a city of little consequence. However, its fall would set in motion a chain of events in Hanoi, Washington, and Saigon that would ultimately bring about the fall of South Vietnam. Its loss was a devastating blow to Saigon, which whetted the Communists' appetite, and it tipped the scales toward further escalation, especially when no B-52s appeared over North Vietnam after its loss, proving to Hanoi that Washington would do nothing. The Communist timetable had been established: increasing attacks through 1975, total victory in 1976.

Early in 1975, at about the time the Communists were preparing their attack on Ban Me Thout, Snepp wrote an important strategic appraisal of NVA activities and intentions. This analysis projected that the North Vietnamese would use four divisions to isolate the Danang and Hue areas, with other units attacking along the coastline. The NVA would make concentrated attacks in Military Region 2 near Kontum, Pleiku, and Ban Me Thout and would initiate attacks in the vicinity of Saigon and Tay Ninh province. However, since analyses are generally "guesswork" on the part of their author, based on his training,

experience, and intelligence networks, Snepp missed pinpointing the Communists' first strike.

He thought that rather than attack Ban Me Thout, the Communists would isolate the city by cutting all roads into and out of it. Other analyses focused on the Kontum and Pleiku areas, completely disregarding Ban Me Thout. Intelligence from the Central Highlands had been lacking, since the CIA, according to Snepp, refused to deal with Montagnards for fear of angering the Saigon government which hated them.

On March 8, 1975, Communist forces struck at 15 hamlets in Quang Tri Province near Hue, isolated two towns in Quang Tin Province, struck at Tam Ky, and made numerous attacks near Saigon and Tay Ninh, as Snepp's analysis had predicted.

As Saigon was reeling, following Thieu's unbelievable decision to retreat rather than defend the Central Highlands, President Ford sent an investigating committee to Saigon. This committee was headed by Gen. Frederick Weyand, who, before leaving Washington, had been aware that Saigon was in deep trouble but believed, Snepp writes, that the U.S. had a moral obligation to support and stand by South Vietnam. Another CIA representative told Weyand that B-52 operations could possibly stop the offensive but might not be enough and that the logistics of feeding and supplying a fast-moving army would present a major problem shortly. Snepp disagreed, saying logistics was not a problem, and that only U.S. intervention or surrender would stop total Communist victory. (Logistics never did pose a major problem, as Saigon surrendered before supplies became scarce.)

However, senior State Department officials told Weyand that the U.S. should not have a "defeatist" attitude and that infusion of more money into South Vietnam would permit Saigon to defend the southern half of the country and possibly strike a bargain with the Communists.

In lieu of B-52s, the Americans promised Saigon 15,000-pound "Daisy Cutter" bombs, left over from World War II and the earlier days of the Vietnam conflict, and the new CBU bombs that cause massive troop destruction by "sucking" oxygen out of the entire area of detonation.

Ambassador Martin did nothing to help the deteriorating situation. He resented Washington's sending in Weyand, as a challenge to his authority and competence, since the ambassador is usually head of the American community in the country of his residence.

Intelligence agents found Martin to be incapable of accepting the reality of the fall of Vietnam. For example, when another agent told Martin that Danang

Background...

Frank Snepp was born and raised in North Carolina, receiving his Master's degree in international affairs from Columbia University in New York City. In 1968, he went to work for the CIA as an European security specialist. Later he became principal analyst of North Vietnamese affairs for the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. During two tours of duty in South Vietnam, 1969-71 and 1972-75, he analyzed North Vietnamese affairs relating to South Vietnam, prepared estimates, conducted briefings, handled special interrogations, and compiled one of the best informant networks in Vietnam. He has worked both sides of the spy "game," functioning as an operative and an analyst.

I first learned of Snepp's book following his appearance on CBS News' "60 Minutes" television show. I have learned that since his appearance on TV, he has been hounded by CIA personnel and called a traitor, and that the Attorney General is considering legal action against him.

Random House, the publisher of the book, had secret dealings of its own. When *Decent Interval* was published, only 12 of the publisher's employees knew its contents. Personnel at the stores to which the book was sent knew nothing of it, until they read a cover letter sent with it. Random House obviously remembered a fellow publisher's trouble following publication of Marchetti's book on the CIA several years earlier.

The final paragraph in *Decent Interval* is important; in it Snepp summarizes his reasons for writing his criticism of U.S. leadership during Vietnam's final days. He firmly believes that the United States must study its involvement there closely, because if we fail and continue:

To treat Vietnam as an aberration, painfully remembered and best forgotten, particularly in its death throes, then we cannot hope to escape the kind of leadership both in the intelligence field and in the policy-making arena that made Saigon's "decent interval" such an indecent end to this American tragedy.

Perhaps after time heals the wounds of Vietnam, the United States can assess its involvement objectively and hopefully will learn from its past mistakes.

Frank Idzikowski served as an Intelligence Sergeant with the 525th Military Intelligence Group and HQ MACV J2 in South Vietnam from April 1970 to December 1971. A former police officer, he is currently employed as a free-lance photographer, and he has returned to school to complete a degree in international relations. Idzikowski is also a member of the Association of Former Intelligence Officers.

was lost, the ambassador, who had heard of Thieu's plan to retake MR 1, disagreed, declaring the city was *not* lost. However, the agent had just returned from Danang, where he had seen the army retreating and the Communists taking the city. Martin abruptly changed the subject of the conversation. Snapp reports this incident to illustrate Martin's attitude toward the progress of the war, an attitude which led to the delay of the evacuation, leaving thousands behind who could have been saved.

One of Frank Snapp's information network agents reported that the NVA had intended to fight for total victory and would rather suffer large personnel losses than delay their offensive. He further reported that the planned NVA attack on Saigon, scheduled for April 19, had been postponed, but the NVA intended to celebrate Ho Chi Minh's birthday on May 19 in a Communist-controlled Saigon. Although Snapp showed this information to Martin, the ambassador still refused to accept the inevitability of a Communist victory.

At the beginning of 1975, Henry Kissinger insisted there was still a chance for a negotiated settlement, a belief he held until April 27, three days before the fall of Vietnam. Early in 1975, Snapp wrote a further analysis, based on a new report from his informant, saying the North Vietnamese had a new "liberation resolution" with no room for negotiations and no tripartite government. He further wrote that the NVA would attack Saigon as early as mid-April. However, when he showed this analysis to Polgar, the station chief called it "alarmist" and skimmed it, looking for statements to justify his own opinion. When he found none, he altered the report to read "attacks in and around Saigon."

There was much confusion in Washington, however, as to exactly what the President could do in terms of protecting the forthcoming evacuation. The question was whether or not Ford could use American combat troops to protect American citizens in Vietnam, as permitted by the Constitution, or whether the War Powers Act, forbidding the use of American troops in Indochina, negated that power. Ford decided that the Constitution took precedence and used troops in both Cambodia and Vietnam.

The fall of Cambodia served as a prelude to what would happen in Vietnam. As Khmer Rouge forces closed in on Phnom Penh, Lon Nol, the U.S.-backed Cambodian leader, offered to resign in order to permit a negotiated settlement. The Khmer Rouge were too close to total military victory, however, to permit negotiation. Although the U.S. Ambassador to Cambodia believed a negotiated surrender was best, Kissinger disagreed with him. Phnom Penh fell three weeks before Saigon.

Events in South Vietnam were moving toward their climax as the Communist war machine rolled across South Vietnam. Danang, Hue, and the surrounding area had fallen to the Communists. During the hastily planned evacuation from Danang, more than half of the Vietnamese who had worked for the CIA were left behind to face the Communists. Before Danang fell, Martin forbade anyone who disagreed with him to speak with the press. Martin's reluctance to believe MR 2 would fall led to the loss of a small U.S.-built reactor in Dalat, built in the early 1960s as part of an electrification program to provide power to that portion of the country. The reactor was in imminent danger of being captured by the NVA, and the AEC requested permission to remove it. Martin refused. He would not even permit the AEC to remove the reactor rods, the reactor's core, until just before Dalat fell to the Communists on April 3, 1975.

Meanwhile, high level officials continued to discuss options for evacuation. According to Snapp, despite Martin's insistence that American combat troops would not be needed to protect a withdrawal, two major options stood out. If withdrawal were made by land from Saigon to the coastal city of Vung Tau and then onto naval vessels, it was estimated that one Army division and 3,000 Marines would be needed to protect the highway from interdiction. Another projection called for several Army divisions and 5,000 Marines to extricate all Americans, Vietnamese, and third country nationals the U.S. was obligated to take out. As it turned out, slightly over 1,000 Marines were used.

The Communist army advanced rapidly: Nha Trang fell, Cam Ranh fell, Dalat was abandoned, Phan Rang and Phan Thiet fell. The family gravesites of President Thieu were bulldozed by withdrawing Rangers in disrespect and defiance. The final battle of the Indochina Wars began shaping up northeast of Saigon at the small crossroads town of Xuan Loc.

At the beginning of April, although Adm. Noel Gayler, Commander-in-Chief of all U.S. forces in the Pacific (CINCPAC), wanted to start the evacuation promptly, Ambassador Martin still refused to believe the inevitable.

Snapp reports that Erich Von Marbod, sent to Vietnam by the Secretary of Defense, spoke with Marshal Nguyen Cao Ky, concerning the fate of the Vietnamese Air Force. After the abandonment of Bien Hoa Air Base, all of its aircraft were transferred to Tan Son Nhut and Can Tho Air Bases. Von Marbod wanted Ky, who still had a loyal following within the Air Force, to arrange to have all its planes flown to Thailand, lest they fall into Communist hands. Ky, however, failed to arrange for the transfer, saying

later that he was preoccupied with other arrangements, and Martin refused to permit the F-5s to be flown out, because he did not want to blacken the reputation of the Vietnamese Air Force's combat defense capacity. No planes made it out of Vietnam, except for those flown out by a few pilots, who fled the country on April 30.

When, Adm. Gayler decided it was time to start the evacuation, he instructed Martin to do so. Kissinger stepped in, however, reminding all concerned that it was up to Martin as ambassador to decide when "to pull the plug" and commence the evacuation. During this time, the CIA had begun to destroy all classified documents in the country to prevent their falling into Communist hands.

Snapp reports that USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) requested permission to fly all their files and documents to Thailand for safe-keeping. Martin refused, saying there would be plenty of time to transfer the files after the start of a cease-fire, since he still believed that the NVA would never attack Saigon. He also asked for additional Congressional aid and reiterated that if Washington pressed for evacuation, Saigon would certainly fall. Throughout this period he continued to play for time. He also declared that he would not leave Vietnam until all Vietnamese employees had been taken care of.

The CIA now reported that the North Vietnamese had moved SA-2 SAM missiles into MR 3, causing further concern for those who were trying to plan the evacuation. These missiles increased danger to allied aircraft, especially slow moving helicopters, that would be used during the evacuation.

On April 7, Gen. Homer Smith, defense attache officer, decided to begin moving out 100 non-essential DAO personnel daily. American civilian contractors in Saigon and retired military personnel living in Vietnam did not want to leave, since the embassy had not yet made provision for the evacuation of their Vietnamese wives and families. These Vietnamese could not leave without proper documentation, which took time and large bribes to Vietnamese officials. Smith's deputy DAO, Brig. Gen. Richard Baughn, solved this problem by flying all wives, girl friends, and families to Clark Air Base in the Philippines without documentation. His action, although in violation of the laws of the United States, Vietnam, and the Philippines, cut through red tape and the contractors began to leave Saigon.

Baughn's action did not sit at all well with the Philippine government. Soon the U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines sent a message to Martin, ordering him to cease this evacuation and to return all

(continued on page 70)

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COOPER ON:



THE H&K 91 ASSAULT RIFLE

Probably the most modern type of personal arm is what has come to be called the "assault rifle," the term deriving from the German *Sturmgewehr*. This class of firearm fires a full-sized military rifle round—or a reduced version thereof—from the shoulder or a bipod, predominantly in the semi-automatic mode. While most versions in military dress offer a full automatic option, most knowledgeable fighting men prefer the semi-automatic over the full automatic in 98 situations out of a hundred. Various assault rifles are conveniently available without the full automatic option, which makes them legal for citizens of countries which regard any fully automatic weapon as an atrocity in and of itself. The assault rifle normally utilizes a 20- or 30-round box magazine and is made predominantly of metal stampings. Its stock may be of wood but is more often of plastic, and collapsible or folding stocks are common. The assault rifle is rarely a piece for the "pride of ownership" boys but it can be extremely efficient—strong, reliable, accurate, and very useful. The serious, universal weakness of the entire weapon class is miserable trigger action. It is true that an excellent trigger has often been found in the Garand family (the U.S. M1, M14, M1A and the Ruger Mini 14), but these pieces are somewhat transitional and might not be considered true *Sturmgewehr* by a semantic purist.

The most prominent examples are the FN/FAL, the Swiss S.I.G 510 and 540 series, the U.S. M16, and Communist AK-47, the Israeli Galil, and the German G3. Heckler and Koch make the G3 for the German and other foreign armies. They also make a civilian version (semi-auto only) for import into the United States, and this weapon is termed the HK 91. It is the subject of this piece.

The 91 has a variety of conspicuous strong points. It also has several weaknesses. Whether it is a desirable item for individual purchase depends upon the needs of the individual.

Any rifle-type weapon must be considered element by element: cartridge, action, sights, reliability, accuracy, ease of control, trigger, stocks, and accessories, as follows:

Cartridge: The HK 91 takes the .308 cartridge (7.62 NATO). Siblings from the same factory can be had in .223 and in 7.62 x 39. Not much need be said about the .308. It is a slightly attenuated 30-06, and it will certainly do. It is quite powerful, available anywhere, it will do anything that a combat rifleman needs, and its accuracy depends upon the quality of manufacture of the particular lot of ammunition, varying from poor to superb. While it may not be a ballistic ideal, it will certainly suffice. Properly assembled, it will stay in a five-inch circle at 400 meters. It will stay on a man-sized target at 1000 meters. It will drive through 3/8-inch mild steel at 300 meters.

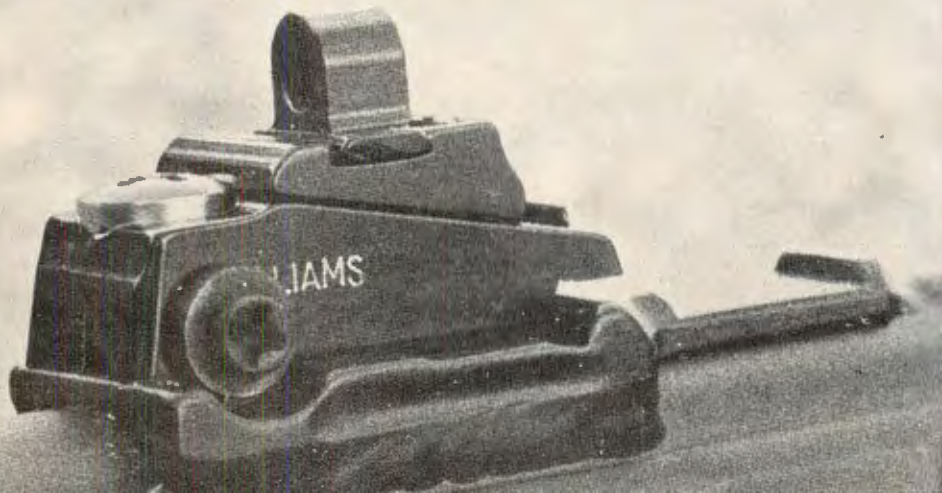
It will drop an elk, a kudu, an argali (or a man) reliably with one solid hit. Its effective range, as with any proper military round, is as far as a man can clearly see his adversary. It's a good cartridge. We need not go further.

Action: The action of the HK 91 is the famous Vorgrimmler expanding bolt lock. It is not recoil-operated, nor is it gas-operated. It is a curious and very ingenious form of "delayed blow back." On the one hand, it has no gas system to require cleaning or adjustment. On the other, it has a fixed barrel, which no recoil-operated system can boast. It thus provides a very high combination of accuracy and reliability. However, there is no such thing as a free lunch, and the H&K action has certain drawbacks.

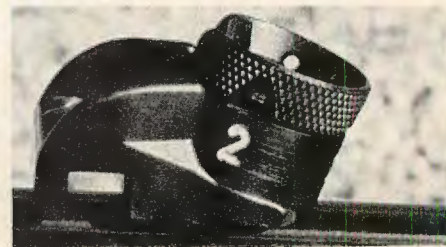
First, because it has no primary extraction, it must use a fluted chamber to assist withdrawal of the case from the breech. This shortens case life for reloaders.

Second, it has very violent extraction, ejecting its empties with such velocity as to be hazardous to people in the way. (It also tends to mangle the cases as they reverse against the flange at the rear of the ejection port. The factory offers a plastic deflector to reduce this damage, but an easier solution is simply to remove the flange, as illustrated.)

Third, its trigger action is unacceptable to a precision rifleman. It has a long take-up, a long, gritty creep, and it is too heavy. The factory can furnish a so-called



Cooper replaced unsatisfactory H & K rear sight (below) with William's Guide-sight (left).





“sniper” trigger which reduces the weight of the pull but does nothing for the creep. For firing from unsupported positions at any distance, this trigger is very poor. Off a bipod it is much less of a disadvantage. For this reason I think any G-91 should be equipped with a bipod.

Fourth, and tactically most significant, *it does not tell you when it is empty.* This is a serious matter. Every experienced infantryman to whom I have introduced this weapon has commented upon it. When I mentioned it to the designers at the factory, they said simply that the German army, for whom they built the weapon, did not specify an empty signal. To be in the midst of an action and to count on a shot, only to hear a click instead of a bang, is most upsetting. It could be fatal. This hazard is not inherent in the design, and the makers could correct it by a stroke of the pen, if they so desired. They do not so desire. As many American service men will remember, from their use of the M-16 in Vietnam, there is a way to get around this. Simply



Fluted chamber shortens life of case. Violent extraction also damages cases. Later problem can be eliminated by removing ejection port flange.

insure that the last two or three rounds in the magazine are tracers. Then when you see a red light you replace your magazine.

Reliability: The 91 is very strong and very reliable. It will function under conditions of extreme difficulty such as mud, sand, ice, etc. It is easy to strip and assemble, and broken parts can be replaced in a flash.

The training film that the factory puts out on this weapon is most impressive, showing its operation under conditions of unbelievable abuse. Naturally, a training film would show this, but I believe that the weapon is indeed extraordinarily dependable.

Accuracy: Intrinsically the 91 is astonishingly accurate, practically up to bench rest standards as it comes out of the box. This is not particularly remarkable, considering that it has a strong, positive lock and a rigid barrel. Heckler and Koch use the most advanced techniques for the manufacture of their barrels, including the “polygon bore,” and the results show. Every commercial weapon is accompanied by a test target and those I have seen are more than satisfactory; they verge upon the unbelievable—like three-quarter minute. Naturally, practical accuracy, as opposed to intrinsic, will suffer because of the unacceptable trigger pull. However, if a man is willing to face up to the problem and fight that trigger back, he can achieve everything that he needs in a weapon of this type.

I have noticed that many riflemen are “trigger sensitive.” Such will have a bad time with this piece. Others, who are used to overcoming bad triggers, especi-

Cooper found H & K 91 effective in open country with bipod extended, buttstock collapsed. Cooper, using two hands to support pistol grip, found technique unusual but effective.

Optional telescoping buttstock reduces bulk. Disadvantage is fragility. Buttstock should be extended only when shooting.



ally from very stable positions, will find that they can hit very well with the 91 as it comes out of the box. If you have a very long memory, you may remember that American soldiers did marvelous work with the old trapdoor Springfield, and that piece had an even worse trigger than today's family of assault rifles. Perhaps we moderns have become spoiled.

Ease of Control: The 91 is rather heavy, at some 10½ pounds loaded, and its controllability is high. The factory has technical diagrams, illustrating that the recoil impetus with this action is distributed over a longer period than with a gas-operated or recoil-operated piece, and that therefore the sharpness of the blow is reduced. This is doubtless true in a technical sense. I do not notice it in shooting the weapon.

(I must always put in a parenthesis at this point in any piece in which I discuss recoil control, because I am one of those who is not much bothered by recoil. Many people tell me that they can detect very small gradations in the force of the recoiling stroke.)

Fired off the bipod the piece moves hardly at all, and quick repeat shots can be delivered in a most satisfactory fashion. Years ago I ran some tests with a scoped Spanish CETME, the same sort of weapon with the same bipod system. In rapid, controlled fire (one shot per second) the results were so impressive that I hesitate to describe them. Suffice to say that rapid, individual shots, delivered from the bipod at middle distance with this piece are so effective as to make automatic fire almost pointless. The bipod is mounted midway out the barrel and allows quick and easy change of direction. In experienced hands, the G-91 is nicely controllable.

Sights: The sights on both the G-3 and the HK 91 are unsatisfactory, since they are the same. When I mentioned this to the factory, I was told that the rear sight was designed by the German army and made to specifications. I have the highest regard for the technical competence of the German army, but I must conclude that its technicians are not particularly interested in riflery.

Everything is wrong with the rear sight on the G-3, and after using it a bit we had to start looking around for a replacement. I do not wish to belabor the issue, but its convex surface reflects light into the eye from any angle, its bright yellow range indicators add to this problem, its apertures are too small, and its V notch is invisible. It offers gradations of one-, two-, three- and 400-meters, which are meaningless—and it blocks out too much of the available view. For this reason I replaced it with a Williams Guidesight, as illustrated.

(It was amusing to discuss this matter with the Williams Company. When I presented the problem, I drew a complete blank. The letter I got back said, "I

don't think we make a sight for the HK 91. I will send you a catalogue." I had been perusing the catalogue, of course. I knew, even if the company didn't, that they did not offer a sight for the 91. What I was suggesting was an improvement, but I apparently got someone who had been assigned to the front office because of family connections. In any event, we now have a large-ring rear aperture which is easily adjustable, and it works like a charm.)

Heckler and Koch offer a telescope mounting which clamps on to the pressed steel exterior of the 91. It costs a great deal and its principal advantage is easy dismounting. The receiver of the CETME rifle (the parent of the G-3) incorporates integral sight blocks. These would be an improvement on the 91, as they would permit the installation of the sight of one's choice without the expensive and rather questionable sight mounting now available. We are all aware of the advantages of a telescope sight, yet I wonder if they apply inevitably to the *Sturm-gewehr*.

I use an excellent three-to-nine Bushnell on my CETME but I do not intend to install a glass on the 91. Among other things, I wish to keep the 91 *small*, and the sight adds to its size without giving any particular advantage. The "hitability" of the 91 is astonishing with its iron sights. If one needs utter precision at middle to long range he probably would not choose a weapon of this type. Without a precision trigger, a precise sight is something of an encumbrance. I do feel, however, that replacement of the issue rear sight is almost a necessity for anyone who purchases an H&K 91.

Stocks: The H&K 91 comes out of the box with a conventional plastic buttstock. It is good enough, but it makes the weapon unnecessarily large. The optional collapsing stock is, I think, a considerable advantage, reducing the weapon's overall bulk for carrying in an automobile or a pack. The disadvantage of the collapsible stock, apart from its expense, is a certain degree of fragility. The collapsible stock will not stand being run over by a truck or dropped out of an airplane, if it is extended. For an individual who wishes to own a weapon of this type, the care that he will exercise to keep his buttstock collapsed at all times except when actually shooting will justify its purchase. Among other things, the weapon is eminently controllable with bipod extended and buttstock collapsed. Very good shooting can be done from the bipod, using two hands to support the pistol grip. In open country this is an unusual and very efficient technique. While the bipod is not furnished with the weapon, I consider it to be an indispensable accessory in conjunction with the retractable stock.

(continued on page 68)



Cooper On: High-Speed Off-Hand Rifle Assault Fire

This is a very revealing picture. It was taken by telephoto without my knowledge during a fast run on our field reaction course at Gunsite, Arizona. I was attempting to demonstrate the optimum balance of speed and precision on a series of fleeting targets, striving for 12 successive hits on a 75-meter sprint in the shortest possible time. Thus we see what might be called the "high-speed off-hand" position.

According to the book, several things are wrong with the firing stance, yet the demonstration was a startling success—according to our feedback. This suggests that the classic offhand position, while obviously splendid for slow fire, may be successfully modified when speed is of the essence.

The first thing that I note is that the right elbow is much too low. The high elbow position of the rifle range is intended to provide full butt support when the head is held erect, yet here we see full butt support with a low elbow, achieved by a forward curl, or "hunch," of the upper body. The cheek is placed rather far back on the comb, as in classic offhand, but the 14-inch eye relief of the 2X Leupold scope permits this.



The left arm is properly low, though the elbow is not directly under the piece, as it must be in any deliberate stance.

This carbine (Remington 600) balances exactly at the rear of the glass—as mounted—so the two hands are equidistant from the balance point. This is as it should be for quick mounting of the piece, but it clearly positions the left hand somewhat to the rear of the forward sling stud.

The left hand does not support the fore-end flat in the palm, "bookwise," but pinches it between thumb and the first two fingers, affording a tight hold for quick deflection.

The whole scene was totally inadvertent on my part, and I am grateful to Dick Brooks for snapping the photo. We never know exactly what we do under pressure, but the camera can tell us. This is the system used to discover the modern technique of the pistol. It clearly applies to rifle handling as well.



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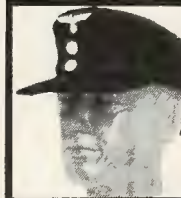
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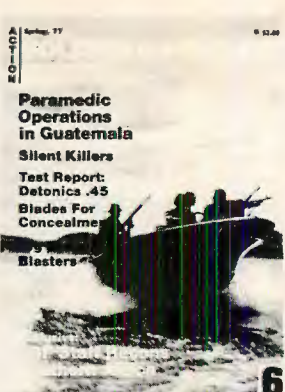
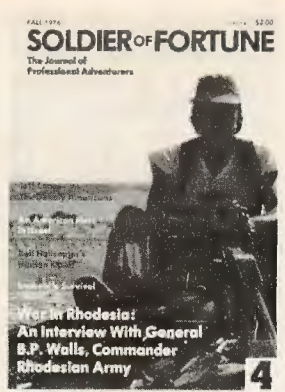
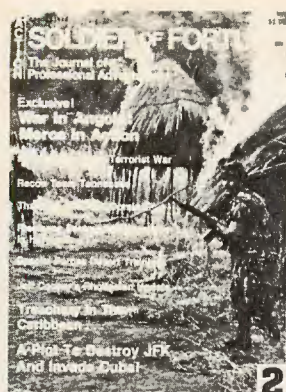
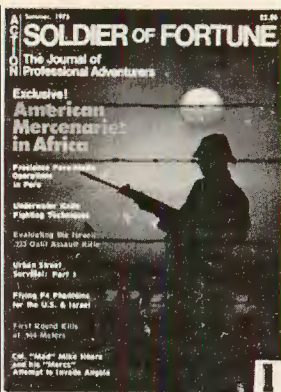


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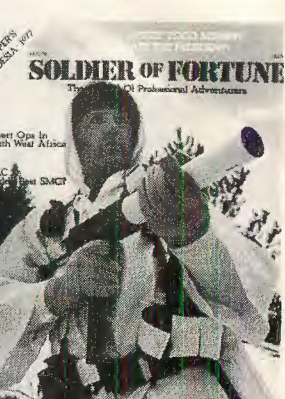
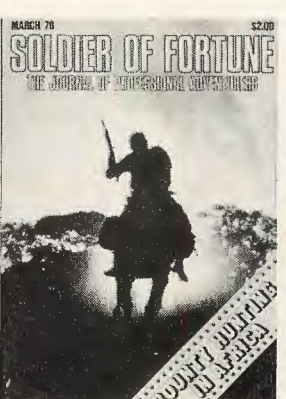
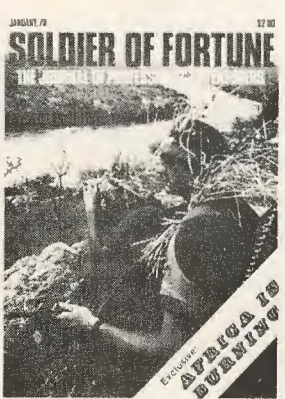
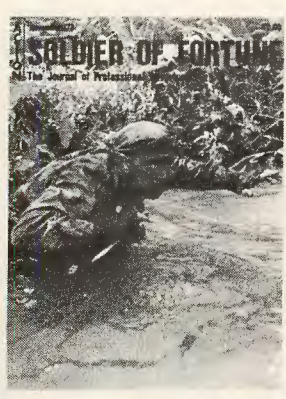
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The French Foreign Legion Today

An American 82nd Airborne Vet
Provides An Inside Look

Part One
by William Brooks



SCOR

MEMORAM





Ceremony marking reactivation of 2nd RLE (Foreign Legion Regiment). Location is the 2nd Reg. Headquarters at Corte, Corsica.

tion about it. Every Legionnaire is given an alias. This alias is mandatory for three years. After this time you may request resumption of your real identity. Whether or not your real identity is returned depends upon your police record in civilian life. Your name is changed in order to separate you from your past and to protect you from persons seeking you whereabouts. In this way the Legion Security Office effectively discourages anyone seeking to locate a Legionnaire for any reason. A volunteer has all his identity papers confiscated. They are all returned at the end of his five-year enlistment. Every Legionnaire starts anew; what you did before matters only in its relationship to your being a good Legionnaire. Who you really are, where you came from, and why you joined are recorded and filed with the Security Bureau. This file is open only to them and its contents are kept in strict secrecy.

When I volunteered at Fort de Nogent, I was unaware of this obligation. But the Adjutant at the desk reassured me, "It is better this way, Johnny." (In the Legion, anyone speaking English is called Johnny.)

I signed my contract for the minimum enlistment term of five years. I was given a worn-out World War II uniform, a musette, beret, and 10 francs. On Friday evening, January 28, our little group of about 15 volunteers, under the guide of an NCO, set out by train for Aubagne, a small town east of Marseille and general headquarters of the French Foreign Legion.

Aubagne has been the LE (*Legion Etrangere*) headquarters since 1963 when it reluctantly left its ancestral home of Sidi-Bel-Abbis, Algeria. In Aubagne are stationed the numerous rear echelon per-

The Rue d'Arras is probably the smallest street in Paris. Its only hotel is cheap and full of American students wasting their old man's money at the Sorbonne. It was here in the Hotel Vendome that I decided to join the Legion. I had come too far to turn back. The Portuguese Military Attachee had turned me down flat when I asked for work. Spinola didn't need any mercenaries. The Portuguese were winning their wars, he had said. The same was true at the South African Embassy. Since it was 1972, events in Africa were soon to change, but at the moment I was in a hurry. I was going broke and getting bored.

The French Foreign Legion had been in the back of my mind ever since I had decided to leave a secure teaching position and come to Europe. Now my time had come.

I hadn't found a real fighting spirit in the 82nd Airborne Division where I had served the biggest part of my three-year hitch in the U.S. Army. And besides the lure of the unknown has always been a peculiarity of mine.

I arrived at Fort de Nogent, Paris, early on Sunday morning, January 23, 1972. A Legionnaire on guard asked, in German, what I wanted. I replied in broken German that I couldn't speak any French, and I had come to volunteer! The Sergeant of the Guard ordered me to wait in a small room while he telephoned

the Duty Officer. A few moments later, a senior Noncom, wearing the rank of Adjutant (Master Sergeant), told me to empty my pockets, whereupon he took everything I owned, including my money and passport, and placed it in a large envelope. I followed him across the courtyard and up the stairs past a door into a dingy squad bay. The place was dirty, looking more like a skid-row flop house than a military barracks, but the food was hot and good. And I ended my first day in the Legion, lying on a cot with a full stomach, watching television.

Much has been written about the Foreign Legion, most of it by folks who have never served. One misconception is that a Legionnaire may enlist under an assumed name. Actually, there is no ques-



Author on only bridge linking Addis Ababa with sea. Holds French MAS 49/56 7.5mm semi-auto rifle with 10-round magazine and permanently attached grenade launcher. Brooks served with 82nd Airborne; saw action in Dominican Republic and Vietnam.

Patrol approaching Fort Kaba-Kaba on Djibouti-Somali border. Border is 100 meters beyond fort. Mountains in background are in Somalia. Fort was manned by approximately 100 native troops led by French officer in what was called a Nomad Company. Legionnaires responded to area frequently as result of numerous "provocations" by Somalis from across border.

sonnel that make any army tick—supply, medical, transit, and music units. The beautiful museum and the white buildings offered an appealing change from dreary, filthy Fort de Nogent, and the appearance of the post lifted my spirits considerably.

Upon arriving, all E.V.s (engaged volunteers) were herded into a separate barracks, fenced off by 10-foot-high mesh wire that gave one the impression of a prison compound. This is just what it turned out to be. We were told that we would remain here three weeks. During this time we would be given physical and mental tests, issued our clothing allowance, and screened by the Security Bureau.

Everyone was told that if at any time during these three weeks he wished to drop out, he would be escorted to the train station and given a ticket to anywhere he wished in France. In other words, you had three weeks to make up your mind whether you wanted to stay. For myself there was no question; the trip so far had only whetted my curiosity.

During this period, everything fell into its regimented place. All of us formed into groups depending upon the language we spoke. Each group's main objective was trying to stay out of work details.

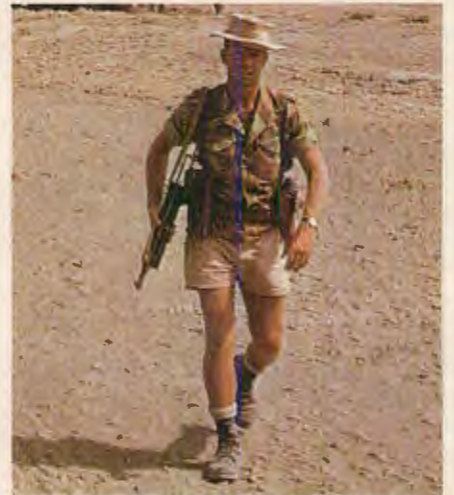
Below: Englishman Mike Schutt (his Legion "nom de guerre") in foreground at camp at Holl-Holl. Building in background is barracks Brooks and Schutt lived in at Holl-Holl. The VLRR (Vehicle, Long Range Reconnaissance) in background carries .50 cal. Browning MG. VLRRs carried extra fuel tanks and integral water tanks for extended desert patrols. Every other VLRR carries a Browning, said by Brooks to be the "best weapon the Legion has."



I found the confinement suffocating and spent hours on end either reading in bed, standing in line, or pacing back and forth in the exercise yard, my hands thrust deep into my coat pockets.

I found some comrades: Peters, an offensive-tackle-sized Finnish seaman, who wanted to try living on land. What he lacked in intellectual capabilities he made up for with his arms, his back, and his heart.

Matic, the Slav, who only went to the eighth grade but was a self-taught intellectual who had a working knowledge of 10 languages, including old and new Greek. I stayed awake many a night, listening to his dissertations on the Roman army or hearing about his narrow escapes from Yugoslav police.



Right: Ranging in .50 caliber Browning at camp during typical "tour de bush." Weapon was always ready for action in this hostile land. Camouflage netting was as much for protection from sun as for concealment.

Author with MAT-49 SMG while on "tour de bush," one of many such patrols along Ethiopian border. Contacts between Legionnaires and hostile Ethiopians were frequent.



Brunin, the Irish farm boy and Queen's Irish Guard, whose simple logic, soldierly bearing, and love and knowledge of the Confederate States Army endeared him to me 'til the end.

Penson, our translator and French expatriot, who had lived 10 years in Scotland and who was running from memories of an unfaithful wife.

Moeller, the son of a WW II German paratrooper, who was trying to prove he was as good as his old man.

Keller, the French-hating ex-Bundeswehr Panzer driver, looking for adventure and the chance to outdo his father's experience in the Wehrmacht.

The Turk, an Istanbul pickpocket, who could put anything in his stomach and always found humor in the depths of depression. We eight were seldom separated during our years of service.

Every morning before roll call, we would assemble in the exercise yard. With hands thrust deep into our overcoat pockets and our collars turned up against the bitter wind, we would vigorously pace back and forth from one end of the compound to the next, hearing only the crunch of white gravel beneath our feet. Occasionally, someone would talk nervously about the latest rumor spread by the last group to visit the Security Interrogator, but mostly we remained lost in our own thoughts until the spell was broken by the duty NCO's whistle to fall in.

Many exaggerated tales of grueling interrogations made the rounds of our group of EVs, which had now swollen to about a hundred, due to new arrivals. The purpose of the Security Bureau is to find out who you are, where you came from, and why you want to join the Legion. This information is usually easy enough to obtain if a person, like myself for example, had a passport. Your real name and where you came from can be easily discovered; only why you want to join the Legion is left in doubt. Once the interrogator believes you, your "envelope of secrets" is safely filed away, you are given an identity card with your alias, and sent on your way to Corsica for training.

The problem arises when persons with no valid form of identification seek to enlist. Then the interrogator must question them until he believes their story. A person joining the Legion in this manner is highly suspect, and extra means of determining his identity are used, such as consulting Interpol or the *Bundes List* (a list of wanted criminals sent by the German Police to the Legion Security Bureau every month).

Major criminals rarely are admitted to the Legion. The price on their heads is too high and the risk of letting a known assassin into the Legion is too great. Once these undesirable types are rooted out, they are usually turned over or traded to the French police for desired

Member of Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, 13th DBLE (Demi-Brigade, Foreign Legion), firing 7.5mm FN/AA-52 light machine gun in Djibouti. Note MAT-49 SMG with magazine folded under barrel between jeep seats. Jeeps are made by Hotchkiss in France to exact specifications of U.S. WW II jeep. Recce squadron was equipped with jeeps, armored cars.

favors. The French police in turn trade them to the police of their country of origin.

Every effort is made to extract the truth from unidentified volunteers. Methods range from ceaseless interrogations to solitary confinement. If the Security Bureau cannot find out your true identity and they believe you are trying to join the Legion in order to elude the hangman, you are usually rejected as "unfit for service for security reasons." Murder, rape, and other major crimes would fall into this category.

Minor crimes are disregarded, and most Legionnaires are guilty of some small crime or another. Desertion of family is probably the greatest. How many wives call the Security Bureau in Aubagne, seeking information on their wayward husbands, is unknown, but I'm sure the number is large.

My own experience with the Security Bureau went as follows:

Adjutant (Interrogator)—with heavy Scandinavian accent: Come in and sit down.

A light shone in my eyes. I could see nothing. It reminded me of an old James Cagney movie.

Interrogator: What is your *real* name?

Me: William Brooks.

Interrogator: What is your Legion name?

Me: Walter Bride.

Interrogator: What is your *real* name?

Me: William Brooks.

Interrogator: Where is your passport?

Me: You have it, I presume.

Interrogator: Where is your *other* passport?

Me: I don't have another passport!

Interrogator: But you know how to get one, don't you?

Me: No.

Interrogator: What is your *real* name?

Me: William Brooks.

Interrogator: Where is your English passport?

Me: I don't have an English passport.

Interrogator: But you know how to get one, don't you?

And so it went for two hours, after which I was handed a five-page document in French.

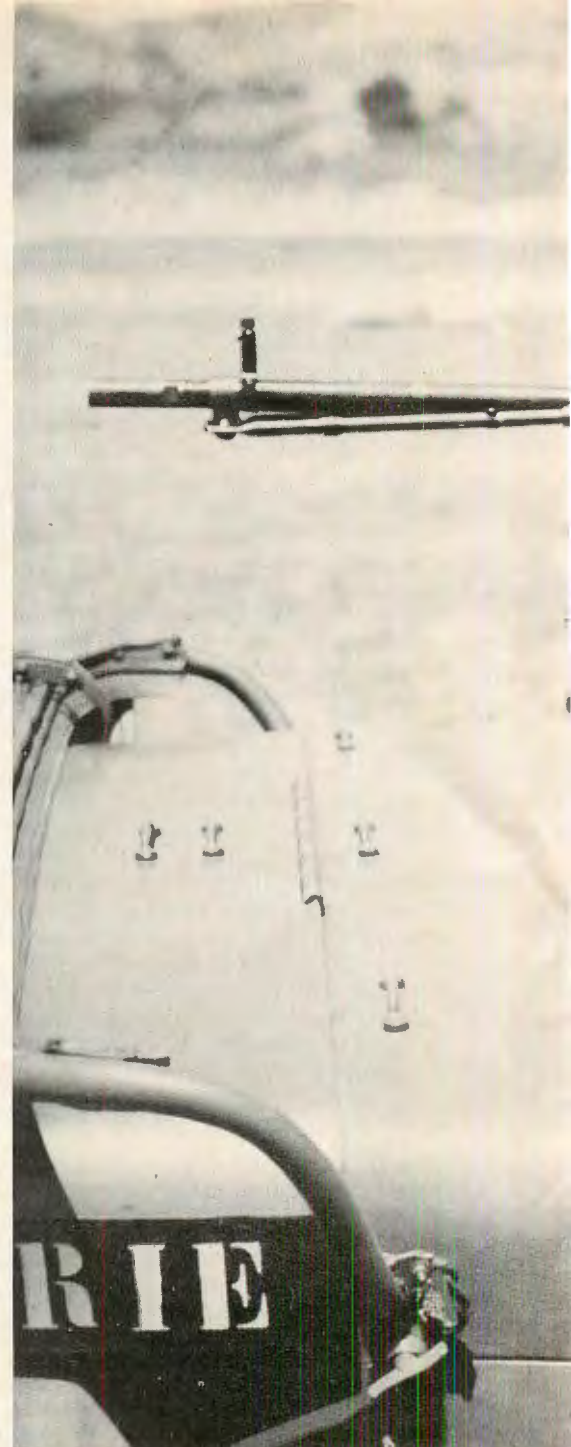
"Do you wish to join the Legion after everything you have seen for the past three weeks?" the interrogator asked.

"Yes," I replied.

"Then sign here."

"Walter Bride?"

"No," he said. "Sign your real name. Walter Bride isn't your real name. If you



signed Walter Bride, it wouldn't be valid."

I signed the paper without the slightest idea of what was on it, handed him back his pen, and left the room: I was Legionnaire Walter Bride, the name I used for three years and eight months.

My comrades had done as well, and we all awaited our transport to Corsica to resume basic training. We all had our new clothing issue and spent the night before departure trying to blacken our rough new boots from their natural tan. Since the French army doesn't issue shoe dye the problem was compounded, and we each had to use a full can of boot polish, trying to change the color.

On Friday evening of the third week, we boarded a ferry at the harbor of Marseille and set off for Calvi, the citadel



township located on the western coast of Corsica and headquarters of the 2nd Legion Parachute Regiment.

Aboard ship we were assigned sixth-class compartments in the hold. Everyone was given a lawn chair and made to sit elbow to elbow, while about 300 Arabs, complete with livestock, moved in with us. After about two hours of very rough seas, everyone became seasick, and vomiting became widespread. Soon the toilets were blocked. Throughout the whole sleepless night, women wailed and babies cried, sea-sick Legionnaires threw up on one another and fights broke out, and people urinated in the corners of the room.

Next morning, weak and tired, we staggered off the ship at Calvi and boarded trucks for Bonifacio, a small tourist

village on Corsica's southern tip. It was raining and the wind was blowing. We bundled ourselves in our parkas and huddled together on the floor of the truck.

Ten hours later we arrived in Bonifacio. We were shown to our rooms by a Belgian Lance Corporal and told to sleep. The next day was Sunday, and we were told we would have plenty of time for arranging our gear. I chose a bunk above Peters, and after making my bed with heavy French sheets, I crawled in bed and fell asleep.

Sunday arrived bright and cold. Since the French military has no quartermaster laundry service, one is obliged to wash his own clothes, in cold water. Time for this is always allotted on Sunday morning. If one has the misfortune to have duty on

Sunday, he must then go for another week, wearing the same dirty clothes.

Because the Legion only issued two sets of fatigues per man and four changes of underwear, remaining clean became a major concern of everyone—Frenchmen excluded. During my entire career with the Legion, I found the French to be totally lacking in even the most basic forms of hygiene. The filthy conditions in the barracks, mess halls, and latrines were completely acceptable to our French comrades. The other groups, especially the Germans, seemed to deplore but dismiss it all as "typically French." I personally found it not only disgusting but criminal!

A Frenchman told me that it was not feasible to clean the latrines. "Why clean
(continued on page 64)

5:30 a.m.

I'm awakened by a soft knocking on the door. Across the room I hear Ron struggle to a sitting position.

"Ngena!" he croaks in Shona.

An African waiter in white livery enters, carrying a pot of tea and cups on a tray.

"Good morning, baas." He greets us in the low rounded voice of the Mashona. I manage to grunt an appropriate response while clawing my way through clouds of mosquito netting. Ron pours the tea, leaning out from his bed to hand me a cup. The tea contains milk and sugar, as is customary in countries left over from the British Empire. When we feel sufficiently awake, we dress for the day's work. Ron puts on his camouflage shirt, black shorts, and Vietnam jungle boots, while I don a khaki shirt, shorts, and *veldskoens*, as the light desert boots are known. We strap on web gear containing spare magazines and ammunition, grab the F.N. rifles and go down to breakfast.

Ron and I are Americans in Rhodesia. We are part of a private anti-terrorist security force. We are patriots, turn-coats, freedom-fighters, mercenaries, soldiers of fortune, parasites, or Crippled Eagles — depending on your point of view. Whatever term is applied, the job we do is part of an expanding field which employs Americans and other foreigners as well as Rhodesians in the war against terrorism.

Ron and I are not part of the military forces. We also enjoy more flexibility and autonomy than we would in the military. We work in teams of between four to 12 "Europeans," as whites are called here. Often each European is responsible for a "stick," or group, of African guards, which usually number between three and eight. Either way, the job is the same: establish procedures to guard against terrorist attacks. The clients include ranches, farms, tea and coffee plantations, and, as in our case, mining operations. All are located in the extensive operational areas. All are vulnerable to the terrorist attack.

6:30 a.m.

Seven F.N.s lean against the wall. We are in the dining room of the hotel having breakfast. Most of us are eating steak and eggs. Sanctions have made cars, guns, and aircraft very expensive, but fertile fields and huge ranches in Rhodesia insure that food prices remain low. Breakfast costs about 60 cents. I glance around the table at the other members of the group. Those who wake quickly are engaged in morning conversation, while the rest of us go about the business of eating with a grim determination that speaks of too much time spent in the pub last night.

We are an odd lot — a miniature United Nations. Out of seven, only one is

Rhodesian. Three of us are American. Ron is an ex-Marine and Vietnam vet. He is a man of action and quick reaction yet has an inquisitive mind that encompasses a wide range of knowledge. Pete, the other American, is an ex-Green Beret. His easy movements and slow Southern drawl contrast sharply with his performance in the bush, where he leaves nothing to chance and his eyes move constantly. Tom is Canadian, ex-Australian and Canadian armies. An army brat and career-oriented, he grew restless with peacetime army and came to Rhodesia where he is applying for a commission in the security forces.

Andy is South African, ex-S.A.A. He was with the South African unit that marched to the hills overlooking Luanda during the Angolan conflict, and then withdrew again when U.S. pressure forced a pull-out. Digs is Rhodesian. Ex-R.L.I., he grew up on a ranch, speaks Shona fluently, and is as at home in the bush as he is on a bar stool. Steve is British by birth but Rhodesian by temperament. Also ex-R.L.I., he's old enough to have fought in four terrorist contacts, but young enough to believe oral sex is bad for your health.

We finish breakfast and climb aboard the company Land Rover. We carry water, three walkie-talkies, field radio, and the afternoon's lunch, packed by the hotel staff. Rounds are chambered and the sound is loud in the cool morning air. We begin the eight-mile ride to the mine. On the way we pass African children on their way to school, women balancing huge bundles of laundry on their heads, and herdsmen driving their cattle to pasture. We are in a T.T.L., or Tribal Trust Land, where all land is owned and controlled by Africans. It is also an operational area, and we pass many abandoned *rondavels*, the native mud huts with thatched roofs, where local populace used to live. Now they stay in *rondavels* built inside the P.V.s, or Protected Villages, where security fences and guards discourage terrorist attacks and intimidation.

"Hold on!"

Tom calls a warning and we lurch forward as the driver hits the brakes. A cow stands in the road ahead, unable to make up its mind which way to go. There are no livestock fences in the T.T.L.s, and such occurrences are common, but Andy is caught unaware and bangs his head on the cab. He curses the animal as the driver maneuvers around it, first in English and then in the more expressive Afrikaans.

"Fok-af jou doos jy mal koei!"

He glares at the cow and then at us when he realizes we're all grinning at his outburst.

"Same to you guys," he says, and we continue down the road to the mine. A year ago, terrorists attacked the mine and closed it down for nine months. They

came in 18 strong and split into two groups. Nine of them went after the two Europeans — a guard and a supervisor. Taken by surprise, the Europeans were tied to barbed wire and shot in the back of the head. The other nine terrorists rounded up 10 of the African workers, lined them up against the wall and shot them.

The mine itself is a particular target of the terrorist leader, a man called "Tough Ngomo," who feels the white man is stealing the land and shipping it out of the country. "Tough Ngomo" is a veteran — he has avoided capture for three years. I wish again I knew more about the man, his background, tactics, and weapons. We get very little information from the regular military, who are reticent about giving intelligence information to non-military groups, or "pseudo-soldiers" as we are sometimes called. All we know are the details of last year's attack and that as soon as the rainy season begins terrorist activity will pick up again.

The rains mean greater safety for the terrors — tracking is more difficult, concealment easier in the new foliage, movement quieter over the wet ground, and helicopter operations hampered by lowered ceilings. "Tough Ngomo" will come with the rains, and when he does, we will likely take casualties. All of us are aware of this probability, but like men in any dangerous situation, none believes he'll be the one to take a hit.

Actually, our group is older than the conscript soldiers of the Vietnam era, and we are more aware of our vulnerability. We know the odds and accept them. In a way, the seven of us are playing a type of Russian roulette, knowing that when the bullets come, some of us will be in the line of fire.

7:15 a.m.

The Land Rover stops at the turn-off to the mine. From here, a dirt road leads half a mile to the main site while another road runs to a secondary site a mile from the first. Both lie at the base of a large *kopje* which rises steeply from the valley floor 600 feet into the air. Topped by a massive expanse of sheer rock, the *kopje* contains a cave about half way up, which serves as our command post.

We off-load at the main road, grab supplies, and begin the walk in. Here is where our work begins — the terrors have had all night to lay mines or, less likely, set up an ambush. Tom, Andy, and Ron spread out along the main road. To their right, Pete and Steve follow the secondary road, checking as they go a small hill covered in scrub trees and boulders which would make a good ambush sight. They will spend the morning at Site 2.

Digs and I spread out and walk directly to the main site across a large field. I watch the large *kopje* ahead of us for any

unusual signs — a metallic reflection, startled birds taking flight, a shape that doesn't belong. It is perfect ambush country. The *kopje* is covered with scrub bush, trees, and huge granite boulders and outcroppings. A man could start at its base and work his way to the summit without being spotted by an observer in the field below.

We reach the main site where Digs stops, staring at the loose dirt which surrounds the area.

"Look," he calls to me and crouches down.

I move close and he points to what looks like an elongated child's footprint.

"What is it? 'Tough Ngomo's' pygmic regiment?"

Digs gives me a pained look.

"Baboon," he says. "See — two prints, always together."

He points out a tiny handprint beside each footprint. We continue up the *kopje* carefully now, as we are on the main dirt path to the cave. Digs reads the earth, eyes searching for disturbed ground or tripwires. I move off the path and scramble over rocks and boulders on the way up. It's a tough climb, but I feel a certain part of my anatomy relax. Behind us, Tom, Andy, and Ron check the generator, compressors, and related machinery before they, too, begin the climb.

Digs and I reach the entrance to the cave. We scan the soft dirt, searching for an unfamiliar footprint or anything unusual. Only crows have been here, feeding on yesterday's lunch. We drop off equipment, then circle around behind the cave, clearing the area in that direction. Digs takes off his shirt and settles in for the first sentry shift. I return to the cave, where Andy is heating water for coffee, while Tom establishes contact with Guard Force personnel in one of the P.V.s.

"Base 15 Alpha 1, Base 15 Alpha 1. Come in."

There is no response and Tom fiddles with the aerials and tries a couple more times. Finally he is successful.

"Alpha 1, this is Base 15. Good morning, chaps."

Rhodesian politeness extends even to the operational area.

We relax over coffee and watch as African workmen arrive at the site below us. We arrive before them and leave after they've gone in the evening. We aren't allowed to go into the work area while they're on the job. Ostensibly, they don't even know we're here. That way, if a terrorist accuses a workman or his family of helping "armed Europeans steal Zimbabwe," the man can deny any knowledge of our presence. It's all a sham, of course; if we weren't here, no African would come near the place.

Ron positions a chair in the mouth of the cave where he can get some sun.

"Andy," he calls. "Are you done with that pornographic book you were reading yesterday?"

Andy frowns. "You mean *The Collector*? That's not a porno book."

"Well, you said it was banned in South Africa." Tom stands up and tosses the remains of his coffee into the bush. "'Little Red Riding Hood' would be banned in South Africa," he says in disgust.

"No," explains Andy. "I never said the book was banned. I said they banned the cover."

"All right then," Ron is patient. "Just let me see the cover."

I finish my coffee and leave with Tom on patrol. The day settles into its routine: two men at Site 2; one sentry behind the cave; two men roving patrol; and two inside the cave for communication liaison and general R&R.

1:00 p.m.

Steve and Pete return to the cave for lunch, while Andy and I replace them at Site 2. We establish one position for awhile, then move to another. Since we are forced into a purely defensive role, we adopt any tactic which makes us less vulnerable to surprise attack, including frequent change of our positions. There is a path through the bush leading from this area to the main site, and part of our job is to monitor movement along the path and check anyone whose presence is doubtful. Usually we recognize the company workmen and don't challenge them, but we do sometimes employ a bit of psychological warfare.

Terrorist intelligence is obtained from two sources: their own observations, and what they can bribe or coerce the local Africans into providing. Our tactic is to create an illusive image in the mind of the workmen. When we spot one of them leaving for the other site, one of us will move ahead to a concealed position very close to the path. Behind a bush or rock, or even in a tree, we select a position so we are not visible until the workman is even with or just past us. And, if he doesn't see us, a slight movement creates a noise sufficient to startle him. The wide white eyes turn into a wide white smile as he recognizes us as friends, and he moves down the path smiling and nodding his head compulsively, as if it were attached to his body with a coil spring. Any reports to the terts will indicate the guards appear unexpectedly anywhere, anytime. I don't know how effective this tactic is, but it helps fight lethargy and boredom during the hot African midday.

Around three o'clock we increase our vigilance. This is the most dangerous time — from now till sundown. Because the Rhodesian security forces are so efficient and their trackers so effective, the terts try to attack as near to nightfall as possible. I move away from Andy to take a crap in the bush. If a terrorist ever appeared I don't know who would be more surprised. With my F.N. leaning

against a rock and my pants down around my knees, I always feel particularly vulnerable and faintly ridiculous.

On the way back to rejoin Andy, I move quietly, placing each foot on rock or a patch of earth free of dried twigs and leaves. It is a game we often play, one which keeps us from getting complacent. Even though Andy knows I'm coming, I manage to get within five yards of him before he sees me.

"I think some of us should have shotguns," he tells me. Look at this bush — if we have a contact it's going to be close-close-close, and I would feel much better with an auto-shotgun."

"Ask Pete to talk to Salisbury — maybe they can send some up."

"I did already. They say they don't have any in the armory."

"You could always buy your own. Use it on ducks when the settlement comes."

Andy brushes ineffectually at the *mopane* files that hover in front of his eyes.

"If I buy anything," he says. "I'll get a pistol. I saw a P38 in the paper this weekend."

"But the price of guns is insane. Those things are selling for around \$400.00, which is \$600.00 U.S."

Andy shrugs it off. "I can't take the money out of the country anyway. Might as well buy something as piss it away."

I think about the guns I have in the States and wish I had some of them here.

4:30 p.m.

The Land Rover pulls into the hotel parking lot, which is filled with strange vehicles that look like left-overs from a science fiction movie. Pumas, Leopards, Tuskers, Panthers — a variety of mine-proof and armored vehicles. All are Rhodesian designed, modified, or manufactured, most are unknown even inside *Jane's*. We clear our weapons and go into the bar.

"Seven shuma." Ron orders a round of Lion Lager.

The bar is the social headquarters for the small community, and at first sight it could be anywhere in the States. The Coca-Cola clock showing two hours till dinner and the sound of Merle Haggard singing "Okie From Muskokie" are all evidence of the American culture which has covered the world like a can of Sherwin-Williams paint.

But then you notice the differences. F.N.s standing in a gun rack against the wall, while men wearing sidearms lean over their drinks at the bar. The usual array of liquor bottles are framed by stickers urging security precautions: "Beer Talk Is Dear Talk"; "Don't Give Lip Service To Terrorism"; "Think Ahead On A Troopie's Account"; "Your Secrets Are Alive And Well And Living In A Terrorist Camp."

Troops and police mix with farmers and ranchers, exchanging information and generally socializing. Here you feel the strength of Rhodesian society, a strength based on common purpose and sense of direction. Here, a hard reality is always present. The people either stand together or watch their country be torn apart. You see it everywhere, from the interest and gratitude shown foreigners who come to help Rhodesia to the grandmother who goes out of her way to pick up a young hitch-hiker carrying a rifle. There is little of the aimlessness, senseless violence, and desperate search for meaning which seems more and more a part of American life.

A car pulls up outside and the young girl at the wheel sounds her horn three times. We all turn to stare at Steve, who grins sheepishly and chugs his beer. He has met the only single female under 50 in the local area.

On the patio outside, a group of Guard Force personnel are playing darts, using the huge Baobab tree as back-board and a blue Rhodesian dollar bill as target. Tom and Ron are sitting at a table nearby with some of these men. Perhaps they'll glean some information on local terrorist activity. Inside the bar, Andy is listening to an earnest young Rhodesian on vacation from boarding school in South Africa.

"It makes me angry," he says. "Dad isn't well, and he's spending a lot of money sending me to school. He thought he'd have the farm to sell when he wanted to retire, but no one will buy these days. And now they're cutting fences and stealing our cattle — we've lost \$20,000 in the past six months. I'm sick of seeing my family upset all the time. I want to quit school and join the army, but Dad won't let me. He won't even let me try to catch these rustlers, but we can't afford to keep losing money."

The cattle-rustling problem is becoming more widespread throughout Rhodesia. Terrorists steal cattle from ranches and take food from villages, which often forces the villagers to steal as well. Some firms have begun to specialize in anti-rustling units, who work on 30-day contract basis, protecting one or more farms.

Andy tells the young man some of us might be interested in night patrols on the farm. He promises to talk to his father about it, but nothing can ease the frustration he feels caused by his inability to help his family.

Around six o'clock, the bar begins to empty. This is a curfew area and it is dangerous to be outside after dark. Steve returns and Pete watches as he waves good-bye to his girl.

"You gonna be around tonight?" Pete asks him.

"Sure — where else would I be?"

"Well," says Pete in his Southern drawl. "I thought by now you'd be spending the night with that pretty little girl."

"Yeah," Ron joins in. "Instead you'll abuse your pillow again tonight."

Steve gives him a disgusted look. "You guys are all jealous," he says.

7:00 p.m.

We are back in the dining room for dinner. It's a replay of breakfast, except everyone is awake now and the conversation is more animated. We've dispensed with Steve's love life and are involved in a common subject of discussion — the Rhodesian political situation. As Americans Ron, Pete and I are caught in the ebb and flow of the conversation, first defending one side, and a moment later the other.

"I wish they'd just leave us alone," someone says, echoing a feeling common in Rhodesia.

"You can't expect that. The big powerful nations always exert an influence on the smaller ones. It's just that in this case the influence is the wrong one."

"It's not only wrong, it's bloody stupid, if you ask me. They put on sanctions so we can't sell America chrome. So what happens? Russia and Japan buy it and sell it back to the Americans at twice the price."

"It's this one man, one vote thing that bothers me. Don't they realize it only works the first time? After that, it's just another dictatorship. Look at Zambia. Look at Mozambique. Look at any country north of here. You find American foreign aid, but you don't find one man, one vote."

"The problem is Americans don't really understand the situation here. Most of them don't know the difference between Rhodesia and South Africa or Zambia and Zaire. They assume the problem here is the same as in the States, where the black is a minority, is underprivileged, is discriminated against. But for all that, his culture is still American, even when it's at ghetto level. They don't realize most Africans here live in the T.T.L.s and their culture is still that of tribal Africa. It's as primitive as European culture was 3000 years ago. Universal suffrage wouldn't have worked in Europe back then, and it won't work in Rhodesia until a certain amount of development takes place."

"Tell that to Owen and Young."

"All I wish is that they'd leave us alone."

And so the conversation continues, through dinner and often into the bar.

The water is hot and I enjoy a long shower. A wood-burning water heater provides hot showers each morning from six to nine and each evening from seven to 10. Back in the room, I adjust the

mosquito netting and pull out a new book I bought in town. Ron arrives with two glasses of brandy and we settle in for the evening, listening to the dull throb of the generator. Today is Monday, and I think back over the weekend spent in Salisbury.

We usually try to quit work early on Fridays. This past Friday we reached Salisbury about 6:30, in time for a bite to eat and some warm-up drinks at the Meikles Hotel. Then we made a round of parties until the small hours of the morning. It was a struggle to wake up Saturday in time to run errands before the stores closed at noon. Then a visit to the Oasis Hotel, where a live band, good liquor, and huge outdoor courtyard drew half the population of Salisbury. Next, we went to the Crippled Eagles Club — Robin Moore's unofficial U.S. Embassy — where we ate, drank, swam, played tennis, and generally relaxed with people who shared a common cultural background. Robin's supply of free liquor and barbecued hamburgers was as inexhaustible as his hospitality, and by six o'clock Robin's wife, Mary, had to lead us to the car and make sure we got the key in the ignition and not in the ashtray. The true test of stamina came later when those still conscious showed up at the Saturday night parties. I spent Sunday waking up late and walking gently.

"What are you grinning at?" Ron wants to know. He's sitting on his bed with his F.N. field-stripped beside him for its weekly cleaning.

"Just remembering the weekend." I tell him. Ron smiles, too.

10:30 p.m.

The generator is shut down. Lights dim and fade to pale yellow. I dive beneath the mosquito netting just as the room goes dark. The hotel is quiet now. Outside, a three-quarter moon colors the highveld a silvery grey. A stillness settles across the land which belies the struggle being waged here. A strange country, filled with contrasts. A land of stark beauty and sudden death; of colonial traditions and terrorist atrocities; of strong friendships and few friends. A country caught in the changing currents of time and thought, drawn inexorably into a political whirlpool which moves faster with each passing year.

The curtain of moonlight outside will rise with the dawn on a new act in this drama, as old as the Greek tragedy it resembles — the melting of two cultures into one. Americans will play their part in this slow and painful transition, although one quite different from that of the American government itself. And whatever the final outcome, those of us working and fighting in Rhodesia will be able to look back, knowing that when help was needed, we were here.



Rugged Training for Rugged Troops

Recce Commandos

By Al J. Venter

AN SOF WORLD EXCLUSIVE

Those military cognoscenti who have followed small war developments in recent years are aware of the formation of an elite fighting unit in Southern Africa: the Reconnaissance Commandos, or "Recces," as they are known locally. Though limited in numbers, these crack commando units—two have been formed and a third is planned—have already been compared with Britain's Special Air Forces, United States SOG elements or Rhodesia's Selous Scouts. Their work is secret and their tasks severe, often in the extreme.

While ostensibly an exclusively all-South African force, a few selected specialists from Britain and America are now attached to the Recces. But, I was warned by their Commanding Officer, Commandant John More, it's not every soldier that need bother to apply:

"The Recces only accept within their ranks the very best of the best. And then they have to prove themselves in their first baptism of fire," he told SOF.

The youngster was perhaps 18 years old, but his staring eyes and the lines of sweat-hardened dirt across his forehead spoke of a man twice that age. He said nothing as the bread was handed out, his eyes following every movement. Only the tell-tale flicker of his tongue over his bottom lip gave any indication of what he really thought. The boy was ravenous.

Eventually it was his turn. His eyes, focused on the basketful of bread in front of him, missed the sardonic smile on the instructor's face. Trying to be nonchalant about the prospect of food, the boy hesitated fractionally as a portion of the loaf was proffered by the man in uniform.

"Take it," said the corporal. There was no need for further prompting; the hungry man had already sunk his teeth into the loaf. The corporal had hardly moved on to the next man before the young soldier spat out the bread in his mouth. The rest of the loaf followed, raising a puff of dust where it landed on the dry earth.

"Bastards!" shouted the youngster. He cursed again, this time in the abrasive language of men much older than himself. "What are you trying to do to us?" he yelled. "We've got three men with serious diarrhoea; they could die if they eat this." He gestured angrily at the discarded bread.

A Recce trainee moments before he drops from exhaustion. He has just completed a two-hour PT workout, including a run through surf with web gear, rifle and 60-1b. sand bag.





Above: Recce personnel qualify in both static line and free fall jump techniques. Utilize HALO techniques for insertion into hostile areas on clandestine operations. Right: Trainees have their mettle tested in some of toughest bush and mountain country in Africa. Note folding stock FN/FAL.



Above: Tough feet or lack thereof determines whether many trainees complete course. Below: Recce volunteers receive patrol briefing from instructor.



The youngster was standing now, his filthy army fatigues coated with the muck and grime of a three-week march without break. His expletives were directed at the corporal who turned and faced him.

"Are you finished?" the corporal asked, his voice dangerously quiet. The youngster's face went impassive. A moment's silence.

The corporal again: "Listen, Jacobs, you worry about yourself. I'll worry about the rest of the lads. You've set yourself the task of finishing this selection course, so let's see you do it. If you don't like it, you know what to do. The truck is on the hill behind us; it's got food and water in the back. All you have to do is go back there and hand in your kit, then you're out of all this."



The two men faced each other, one trim and smart in a fresh uniform, the other sallow, wide-eyed and filthy.

"Have you got that?" shouted the corporal.

The youngster nodded, but said nothing. He sat down heavily, looked away, his lips twitching. He felt as though he was swallowing the humid Zululand air instead of breathing it. His saliva had turned to paste. The corporal spoke again.

"But you've had your say, Jacobs, and now I'm going to have mine." Now there was a hint of apprehension in the youngster's eyes.



Recce instructors give immediate reaction drill instruction.

"You see that far peak there, Jacobs? Not the first one, the second one, about four, five miles away?" The youngster nodded. The corporal smirked and waited a moment before he continued.

"Well, my boy, you just start running. Full pack. We'll wait for you here."

Jacobs got up. It was clear to all of us that he was exhausted. "Move it, then!" shouted the corporal. A little dazed by the harsh and uncompromising reaction to his earlier outburst, the youngster moved into a loping stride down the hill.

The second peak seemed an awfully long way off.

South Africa's Reconnaissance Commandos are an elite force. It is no secret that its members—most of them in their early 20s—are regarded with little short of awe by their colleagues in uniform.

As one hopeful Recce candidate put it: "To be a Recce is an incredible achievement. Most guys with a bit of initiative get bitten by the Recce bug at some time or another, but very few aspirants make the grade."

Indeed, of the 700 eager-eyed enthusiasts who applied to join the Reconnaissance Commando course last May, only 45 individuals were successful. The rest dropped out along the way, the majority within days of being subjected to one of the harshest pre-selection physical training courses in South Africa. "Jacobs" was one of them. And that, of course, is not his real name.

Much of the work done by the Recces involves clandestine behind-the-lines operations. Tough, aggressive, and highly skilled in the arts of unconventional warfare, the Recces have, within a com-

paratively short time earned the grudging respect and fear of our enemies. In fact, a large proportion of the decorations for valor awarded to South African forces who went into Angola went to the men of the Recce Commando.

South Africa's Recces are what the layman would term "hard core" professionals. They handle special tasks in the operational area—such as penetrating behind the lines, obtaining specific information and then getting out again.

And not only must they reach their objective and return; they must do it

undetected. And if there is a presence along the route which threatens their security, then the Recces are trained to deal with that presence in the most efficient manner imaginable. That's where individual initiative comes in; three-quarters of all Recces have completed Senior School or have had university experience.

The typical Recce is not only as fit as an antelope, he is also an expert parachutist. Many of them also receive extensive instruction in maritime warfare, which can include tasks such as swimming a mile underwater, attacking an enemy boat and returning to the pre-arranged rendezvous point—or "RV" in Recce terminology.

The Recce is also a specialist tracker; he knows how to survive alone in the bush or desert, or in a foreign country without outside help, often for months at a stretch. Among his nefarious skills can be included the handling of explosives, radio electronics, navigation, logistics, armed and unarmed combat, COIN warfare and a fully comprehensive knowledge of enemy weapons.

The average Recce commando is aware that he may often be called upon to use his knowledge of all these facets of warfare. He consequently takes his training seriously. So do his officers, which is one of the reasons why the Recce selection course is as stiff as it is.

Once the course has been completed and the aspirant joins the ranks of the regular Recces, as likely as not he will



Once a day during the course, Recce candidates are allowed to prepare a meal; in this case, biscuits and water which make a "delightful" soup.



Above: A chopper swings low over a Recce unit in North Zululand. Below: Sand and surf provide variety to training. Recce candidates appear to be unimpressed by scenery.

achieve his first baptism of fire with those same instructors who originally put him through his paces.

A Recce corporal explained: "When we go into a combat situation, I and others like me want to know that, no matter what, the man next to me is as reliable as I am. Whatever the enemy throws at us, no matter what hardships or provocations, we must be sure that one and all will come out again, even if we have to carry a man out." It is the tradition of the Recces that they have never yet left one of their own behind in enemy territory: dead or alive.

"There are no half-measures," said the instructor, himself a youngster of 22 who has seen hard months of fighting in Angola. "We all quickly learn the limitations of pain and how to control it," he added.

Recce officers are the first to concede that while most aspirants are pushed to the limit of their physical capabilities and endurance, the entire selection program is geared to actual combat conditions. Said one officer: "The sort of tasks these young fellows will be doing demand that they be in total command of all situations at all times. And these situations can sometimes be extremely fearsome.

"So we look for people who have the qualities to overcome this fear. It is no use my striking at the enemy and then

finding my own men cracking up because of heavy retaliatory action."

The South African Force holds two Recce selection courses a year. Recruiting instructors visit various Army, Air Force and Navy units, lecture on the nature of the work, outline what is required of an individual and run a few illustrative films.

For those who do apply to join the Recce Commando, there follows a stringent process of weeding to ascertain, in the words of one instructor, "those who think they are in for a joy ride." Not only are the men screened medically, but they are also tested psychologically and quizzed as to why they want to become a Recce, what they think they have to offer, what they fear, whether or not they can get on with others, and so on.

By the time the Recce candidate is ready to undergo the two-phase selection program — which takes place in the wilds of northern Zululand — he must be able to do the following with relative ease . . .

- Cover 20 miles with normal kit and rifle — plus a 70 pound sand-bag — within six hours.
- Do 40 push-ups, eight chin-pulls and 68 sit-ups within a brief though specified time.
- Complete a course of 40 shuttle runs, covering about 300 yards in 90 seconds.



- Swim freestyle for 50 yards.

Average age of all entrants is about 19, although one experienced veteran of 39 did successfully complete the last selection course, even though, in his own words, he "sweated blood to do it."

The two-phase period in Zululand is basic and concentrates largely on teamwork. The men are divided into groups of between six and eight and all assignments are completed by the team as a whole. If just one member of a team is late at a particular rendezvous, then the whole team goes without the next meal. Thus, the men are made aware of the necessity of working together.

Much of the Zululand program is centered on the endurance capabilities of the individual. The men are required to react to situations, often as long as a month at a stretch, during which there is very little water and almost no food. An added encumbrance is that the men are not allowed to wash — and the exposed parts of their bodies are smeared with camouflage cream.

I followed one group through the bush for several days at the end of a 17-day training period. The men were at the limits of their physical endurance; few were able to sleep more than a few hours a day, and rations had been cut by half. The instructors taunted them interminably.

Said the officer with me: "This is all part of the process. We frustrate them. We try deliberately to make them crack. Day in and day out we hassle them."

What was astonishing was the physical condition of some of the aspirants.

All of the soldiers had serious problems with their feet. In one case, blood blister upon blood blister lay across the entire foot and heel of a youngster who looked about 16.

These men had been walking through sand and swamp and some of them had feet rubbed raw. Others had huge ulcers on their legs.

During the three weeks in Zululand, the soldiers had walked more than 400 miles across some of the harshest terrain in Africa.

One of the men, a young volunteer force officer from Johannesburg, had sprained his ankle five days previously. But he kept on going and came out on top in the end. Another had a gashed head. "I walked in my sleep as we marched and bumped into a truck," he said.

In spite of all the hardships, each man refused to give in. Instructors alternately ridiculed them or befriended them and offered them beers, food and a hot bath, but they pushed on, ignoring provocation.

Recce candidates cool off during river crossing exercise. After covering over 400 miles in three weeks, the survivors are lean, mean and competent.

At one RV point, with some of the youths close to total exhaustion, an instructor organized a two-hour PT session in soft beach sand. Some of the men dropped after about 30 minutes, but they lay a while, listened to the jibes of the instructors, then got up and joined their squad again.

You have to live for a while with the Recces on a selection course to really understand what goes on in the minds of these young men who are being pushed almost to the limits of physical endurance.

One youngster maintained that on the long marches between various RV points he composed elaborate menus in his mind. He would spend hours working out one set course after another.

Another spoke only of springbok jerky, or what is called *biltong* in South Africa.

Ironically he had gone to school in Johannesburg and had grown up in the streets of Hillbrow and Yeoville, which is not unlike the Bronx or downtown L.A. The only place he had ever seen a springbok (antelope) was at the zoo.

According to one of the veterans on the course — it was his second time round — a favorite trick of the instructors was to prepare a barbeque along the route. This little ploy is usually reserved for the final week when the men have been denied adequate food for several days.

"They start popping beer cans and you can smell the meat cooking an hour before you reach the spot. It's heart-breaking," said one of the men. "They offer us huge steaks and encourage us to join them. At the same time, of course, they add that all we have to do to join the

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**AS DEADLY
AS ITS
NAMESAKE:
THE
9mm
MAMBA**

by
**Barney Barco
&
Dana Drenkowski**

How many of you readers have bought an expensive auto handgun for social or competitive work, only to have to send it to a gunsmith for costly modifications necessary to use it in either role? Have you ever wished that a combat shooter would design a handgun for out-of-the-box use in any situation? Well, we have good news for you!

A brand new handgun is coming onto the market soon, imported courtesy of Navy Arms, which should fill the bill for many of you. Conceived by joint West German and South African technology, the weapon is manufactured in West Germany and shipped to the U.S. for assembly. Called the "Mamba" in honor of the aggressive and highly lethal snake found in Southern Africa, it can make its claim to fame by being the first production combat auto designed by qualified combat (real combat) and competition shooters. It resembles the Smith and Wesson Model 39 externally, but its internal design and function are unlike anything seen on production handguns before.

To begin with, the Mamba comes in stainless steel, and that means *everything* but the nylon panel grips. It has a hammer and sear of 440 cast stainless steel, springs of 17-7 PH stainless steel,

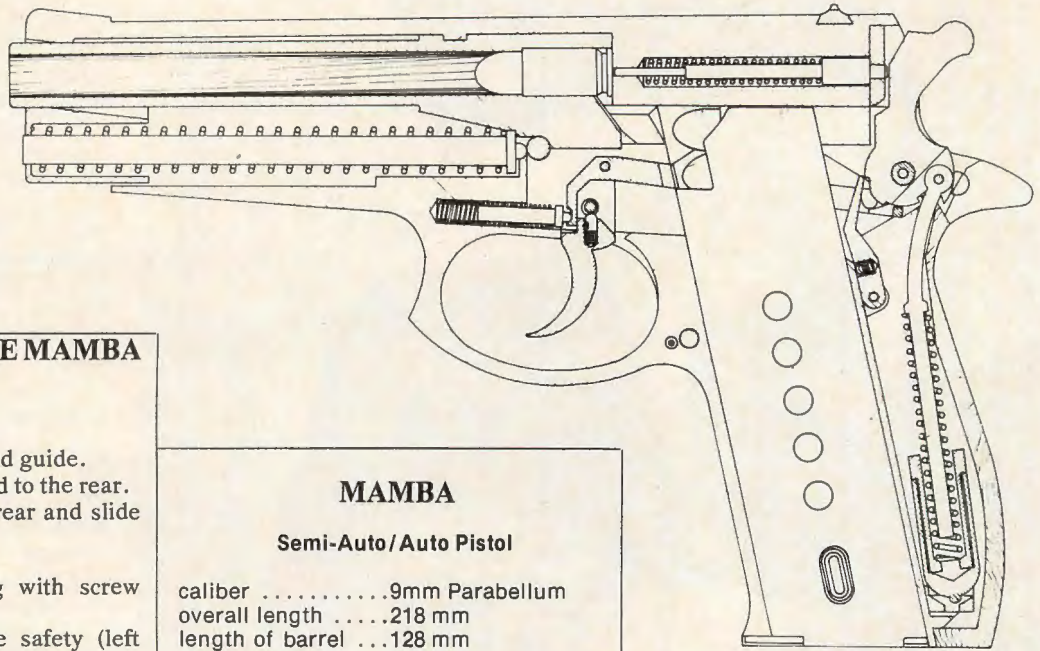
a barrel cast and bored from 416 stainless steel and the frame, slide, and all other parts of 431 stainless steel. The magazine and all its parts except the magazine follower are stainless steel as well. The magazine follower, at least on pre-production models inspected by the authors, is made of glass-filled nylon material. The gun's primary designer proudly states that his gun is virtually indestructible, thanks to the amount of stainless steel used throughout.

The first models to be available in the United States will be offered in 9mm, with plans for a .45 version ready for future production. The Mamba is a double-action auto, which some combat shooters (read International Practical Shooting Confederation) may not like—but hold on, you Jeff Cooper fans! It has a cocked-and-locked feature! The shooter has the option of carrying it hammer-down, double-action, or cocked-and-locked, depending upon his particular bias or mood that day. It comes complete with ambidextrous hammer safety, adjustable main spring, concave shaped trigger guard providing a non-slip surface for a two-hand grip, five-inch micro-groove barrel and the longest slide rails of any full size auto—including the famed Auto Mag!

The entire trigger group comes out easily in one complete package, as in expensive, high-bred target pistols, and the hammer spring is completely adjustable. As if that weren't enough, removing the grips allows access to all the parts, which, by the way, are fewer than those found on other auto pistols.

The Mamba has no barrel bushing, relying instead upon the unique internal shape of the slide to hold the barrel tight when in battery and allowing sufficient room for the barrel to tilt when the slide moves rearward. In addition, the Mamba also features an adjustable trigger stop/backlash.

Versions offered to the military and police in various countries will offer an unusual dial-a-burst capability for full auto fire, with built-in limiters controlling the rate of rounds expended to two or three (dealer's choice). At 1500 rpm, it is said the pistol doesn't have time to climb out of the kill zone in a two or three-round burst, unlike its Russian selective-fire counterpart, the Stechkin 9mm with its 750 rpm rate of fire. Magazine capacity for the military and civilian 9mm versions will be 15 rounds, with 20, 30 and 40-round versions to be offered later, presumably for the dial-a-burst weapons. The .45 ACP will have an



FIELD STRIPPING THE MAMBA

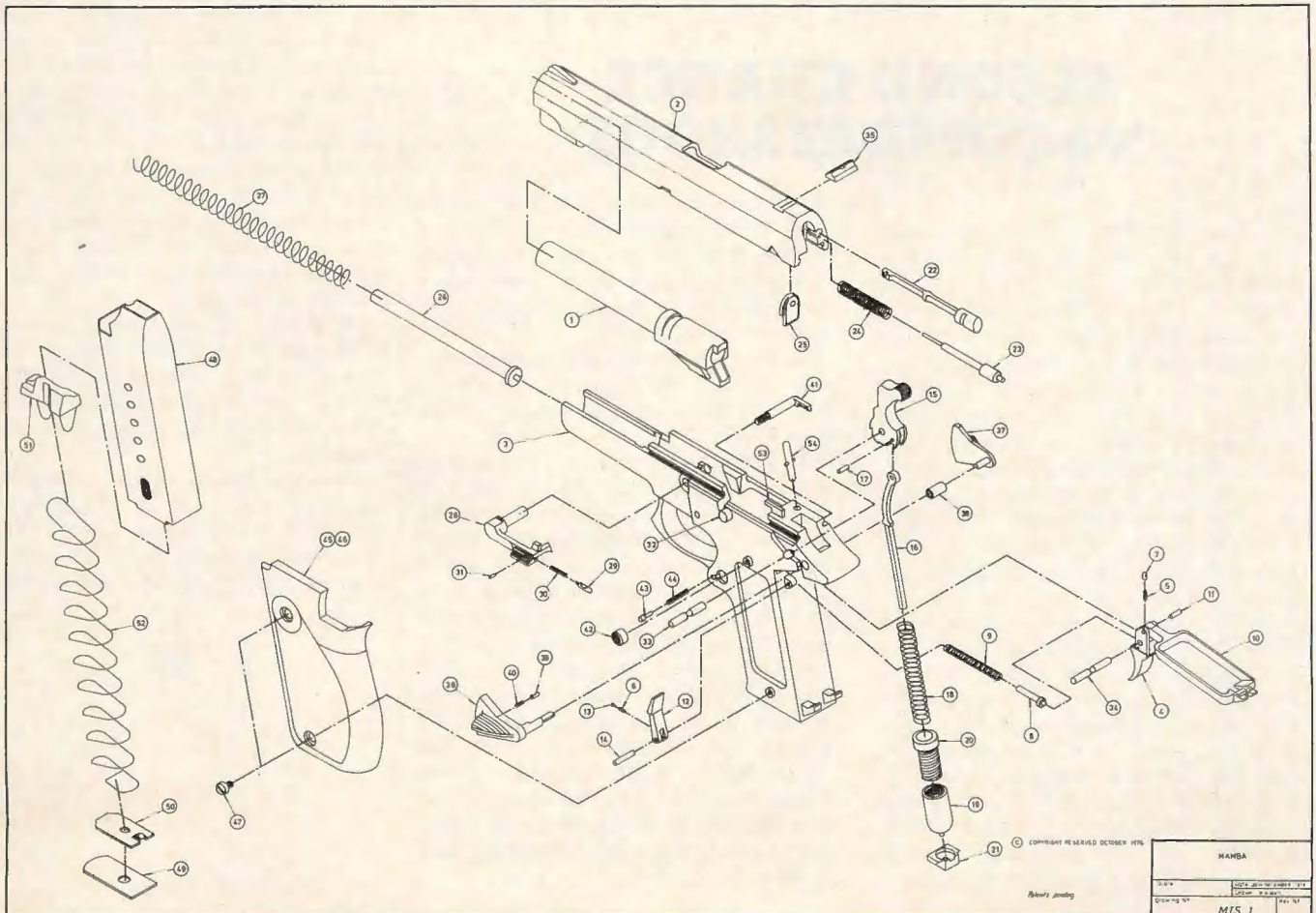
1. Engage slide lock.
2. Push out slide stop pin.
3. Remove recoil spring and guide.
4. Remove barrel down and to the rear.
5. Push hammer down to rear and slide safety out.
6. Remove grip handles.
7. Lever out main spring with screw driver, etc.
8. Pull out detent for the safety (left side).
9. Peen out hammer and strut from right-hand side.
10. Peen out sear pin.
11. Peen out disconnecter from right side behind.
12. Trigger group.
13. Pull out trigger and trigger bar (together).

MAMBA

Semi-Auto/Auto Pistol

caliber9mm Parabellum
 overall length218 mm
 length of barrel ...128 mm
 pistol height136 mm
 weight loaded1.62 kg (15rd. mag*)
 finishsatin stainless steel
 *20, 30, and 40 rd mags also available.

Above: Mamba resembles S & W Model 39 externally; has no barrel bushing. Instead inside of slide holds barrel in place when in battery. Below: Internal design is blend of several auto systems.





David Westerhout, IPSC World Champion examines gold-plated Mamba he won at International Matches, Salis-

bury, Rhodesia in August 1977. The Mamba was an early prototype.

SECOND CHANCE '78 COMBATSHOOT

Second Chance Body Armor, Inc., Box 578, Central Lake, MI 49622, is sponsoring the Second Chance Police Combat Shoot 7-11 June 1978 at Central Lake, Michigan. Their prizes total more than \$15,000 worth of cash and merchandise. Registration, limited to the first 300 applicants, is \$45, \$5 to accompany application, balance to be paid upon arrival for competition. Since 178 entrants have already signed up (as of 8 February 1978), don't delay! For further information write Richard Davis, President of Second Chance, or phone him toll free at 800-253-7090.

All shooters will shoot a total of seven times, but only the last six will be totalled for aggregate time scoring. The first flight of shooting will be a warm-up which can be used to determine the "best individual time" or as a tie-breaker for the other six flights' aggregate time.

Each of the flights will be clocked with hand-held stop watches, which will be stopped when the individual shooter either clears the table of the five pins or

at the 15-second mark, whichever comes first. Distance from shooter to the five bowling pins on the table is 25 feet. Firing will be done in threes so that three men will shoot at the same time at their respective table targets.

In the "pin" shoot, use of any reasonably normal handgun is permitted. Extended magazines and shoulder stocks are *verboden*.

Two-man teams, limited to pistols only, will be accepted this year in the Unlimited Division. One-man teams are the same as in 1977, competing with .45 and 9mm "carbines and sub-machine guns."

A special bonus will be the Andy Nuss division in which the shooter stands with two S&W Model-60s pointing at an Advanced Training Systems Duel-A-Tron target. When the target turns unexpectedly the shooter has 2½ seconds in which to place 10 shots. Entry fee for this side show is \$5 per attempt. Second Chance furnishes guns and ammo so that everyone will be using the same equipment. The M-60s will be furnished with Packmyer "no-slip" rubber grips.

11-round capacity. A drum magazine is being developed for the Mamba by Navy Arms. The .45 magazine will hold 30-35 rounds, while the 9mm version will have 40-45 rounds.

We were lucky enough to obtain an example in Africa recently and spent an afternoon testing it. Our example was not set up for full-auto fire with the burst control device, so we were unable to evaluate that unique option. The double-action trigger pull was surprisingly smooth, although a bit heavy, but adjustment to the mainspring brought the pull down to a comfortable level.

It is a large pistol and it filled the hands of the shooters for a solid, positive grip, and soon we had our groups down to a respectable four inches at 25 yards—pretty good for a pistol that has had some 8000 rounds of various 9mm ammo run through it.

The barrels are cast instead of machined, and this example would occasionally keyhole a round, possibly due to improper crowning. The people at Mamba have worked this out in the production models (the weapon tested was pre-production). The weight of 42 ounces helped, as did the shaped trigger guard and the oversized sights. In all, it is quite an impressive weapons system, is well thought out, and all the bugs seem to have been worked out *before* production, something the large, established factories in the U.S. are not known for.

The Mamba is the answer to a lot of our needs and fills the void between military weapons and specially modified competition guns that has existed for far too long. It wasn't easy designing this revolutionary auto, but the Mamba people persevered and had some of the best brains in the business to help out. The proof is in the use, however: one SOF correspondent has purchased one for use during his travels in the bush. Look for the first in-depth report soon in SOF on this fine new weapon.

Meanwhile, all the best to the people at Mamba, and any SOF readers who may be leaving for "parts unknown" better get their orders in, because it looks like there will be a real scramble for these beauties.

The 9mm Mamba will be available in summer, 1978, with no projections yet for the .45. It will cost the shooter around \$275—not a bad price for an already customized, stainless steel combat weapon.

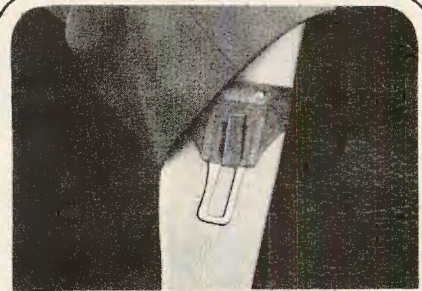


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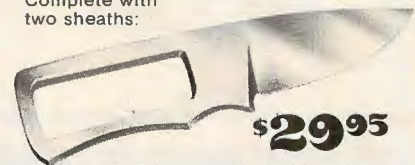


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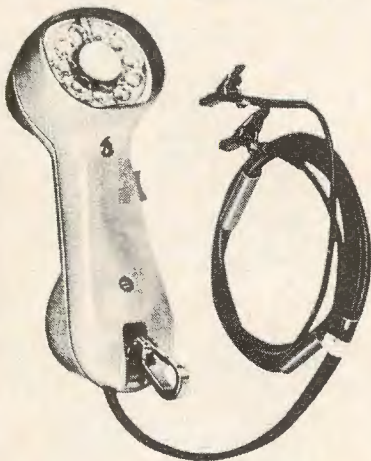
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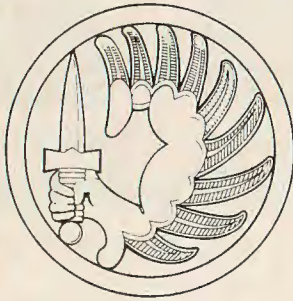
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THE AUTHOR

Matt Braun is a former army officer and combat instructor who spent many years training troops and civilians in survival methods. Moreover, he's a survivor himself, and in terms you'll never forget, he reveals all the tricks of the trade.

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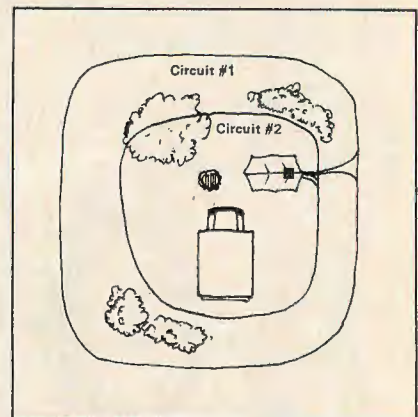
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Behlert Combat Custom .45 Colt Automatic

by Daniel J. Predovich

Like a new toy at a kid's birthday party, a new gun at the range attracts attention—especially a silvery customized .45 auto.

In March 1977, Robert Brown, Editor and Publisher of *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine, ordered a full-house custom combat job on a Colt Mark IV .45 auto from Behlert Custom Guns, Inc., 725 Lehigh Avenue, Union, New Jersey 07083. Brown's custom modification list read like a supermarket shopping list, though the long green that he paid totaled a few more dollars than my monthly grocery bill. It is this piece that has accompanied me to several range sessions over the past weeks, and garnered more than its share of attention from competitors and lookers-on.

This weapon has the standard "necessary" modifications, such as throated barrel, polished feed ramp and trigger job. It also sports certain "Cadillac" extras that are nice but not essential. The more I have competed in combat matches over the last few years, the fewer modifications I feel are required to keep up with the competition. Bearing this in mind, let's talk about this weapon, and each custom change or addition to the basic unit, with a critical eye.

First of all, the big auto is topped with a Smith and Wesson "K" rear sight and a ramp style front sight with an orange plastic sight insert for "visibility."

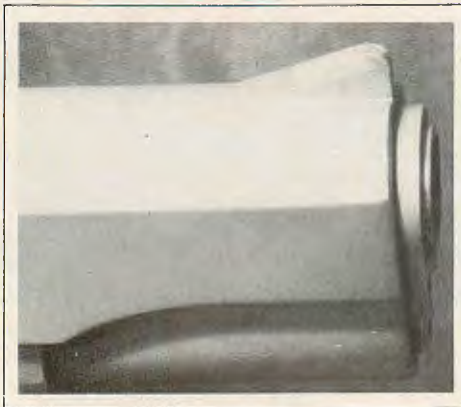
The installation is clean and solid. The Smith and Wesson sight is held by one allen head machine screw, which in most cases is sufficient. However, I have seen Smith and Wesson sights shear a single retaining screw during recoil and fly off the weapon.

I have checked with Frank Behlert, regarding this problem. He told me that $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of the sight spring is ground at

60 degrees to mate a dovetail cut in the slide. This precludes any upward movement, and the spring precludes movement to the front and rear.

For an adjustable rear sight, my strong preference is a low mounted Bo-Mar. This is the strongest adjustable rear sight without qualification. All things considered though, I personally feel that a good visible fixed rear sight like the King or the old National Match sight are ideal for the competitor who shoots hard ball and a duplicate handload for practice. As for the colored plastic insert in the front sight, I feel that most shooters will perform better with plain black sights. Differences in sun position cause glare on colored sights, making the sight picture fuzzy. I've never had trouble picking up a quick sight picture with a good flat-black front sight. It does not reflect much light; therefore, it produces a sharp, clean sight picture necessary for longer shots.

Almost every part of Brown's .45 Colt is armoloyed. The finish is even and is



Author feels that black sights are superior to this orange plastic front sight insert.

applied equally on surfaces, corners, and crevices. My weapon would have armoloy applied only on the frame, if applied at all. Even the soft grey color of armoloy reflects light from the top of the slide on a bright day, thus interfering with a clear sight picture. I see a need for armoloy only in humid areas. In the dry Colorado climate I have carried a blued finish Colt Commander every day for two years. The factory blue finish has not worn appreciably and I have noted no rust problem whatsoever. This is especially significant, considering that I carry it holsterless, stuck in my waistband—conductive to rust. Armoloy, I feel, is needed only in a humid climate, or if you just like the appearance.

A Bar-Sto stainless steel barrel and bushing had been installed and an "accuracy job" performed on the auto. Bar-Sto Precision Machine Products are manufactured at 633 South Victory Boulevard, Burbank, California, in a well equipped shop owned and operated by Irv Stone. I met Irv last year and had the opportunity to view his operation. He takes great pride in his work and turns out what I believe is the finest match barrel/bushing system anywhere. As the sage said, Irv has forgotten more than most of us will ever know about .45s. He is a perfectionist at heart and a fine gunsmith by inclination. Behlert has chosen well to opt for the Bar-Sto touch to his custom weapons.

"Accuracy job" seems to be one of those nebulous terms that each gunsmith defines at his own pleasure. The fact is, however, that unless you shoot bullseye matches with the same weapon, you can get along fine with an "unaccurized" Mark IV for combat competition. One addendum to this remark is that shooting is 90% psychological. If you feel that you

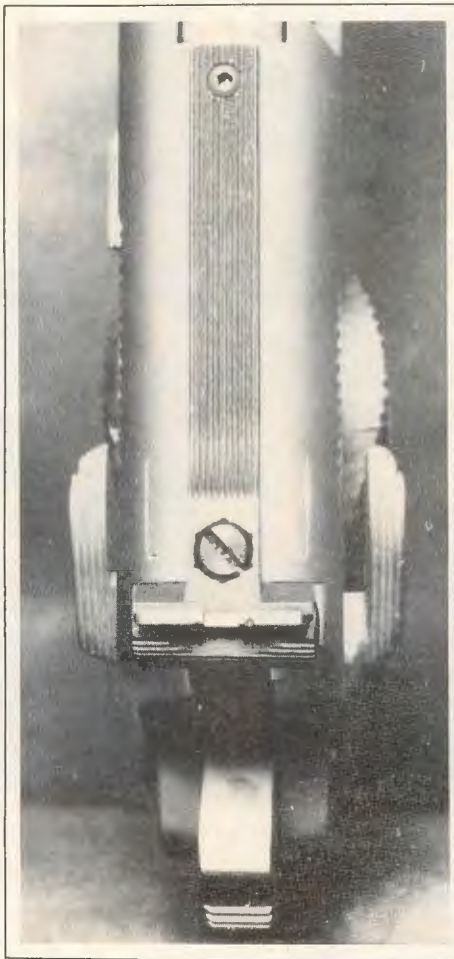
will shoot better with an "accuracy job," then by all means put your money up. Just be aware that you don't need the extra work and expense for most combat shooting. Indeed, a tight "accuracy job" may decrease reliability.

The Behlert interpretation of "accuracy job" appears from testing to be an adequate rendering of the term. The weapon prints at the point of aim without a need to fiddle with the sight adjustments. Seven rounds cut one ragged hole at seven meters; 15 meters opened up the group somewhat; and 25 meter shots all stayed well within the head of an I.P.S.C. target. I did not bench rest the weapon. The combat accuracy was sufficient and bench resting for smaller groups was not relevant to the intended use of the piece.

Reliability was flawless with factory hardball; however, loads built from 230-grain cast bullets backed by five grains of Bullseye in military cases fed with inconsistent results. Out of 100 rounds, there were nine malfunctions. However, all nine occurred in the first fifteen rounds cycled through the weapon and all nine hangups were caused by the slide failing to lock into battery after recoil. Pushing the slide forward into battery solved the problem for that cycle. The same reloads feed flawlessly in my weapons now, but I recall the same lock-up problems when my guns were brand new. After all, even a Ferrari needs to be broken in.

The trigger pull is a little heavy at a shade over four pounds, but it is very crisp with no creep. An adjustable trigger stop is installed in a serrated short trigger. My long fingers would be much more at home with a long trigger and about 3½ pounds of trigger pull.

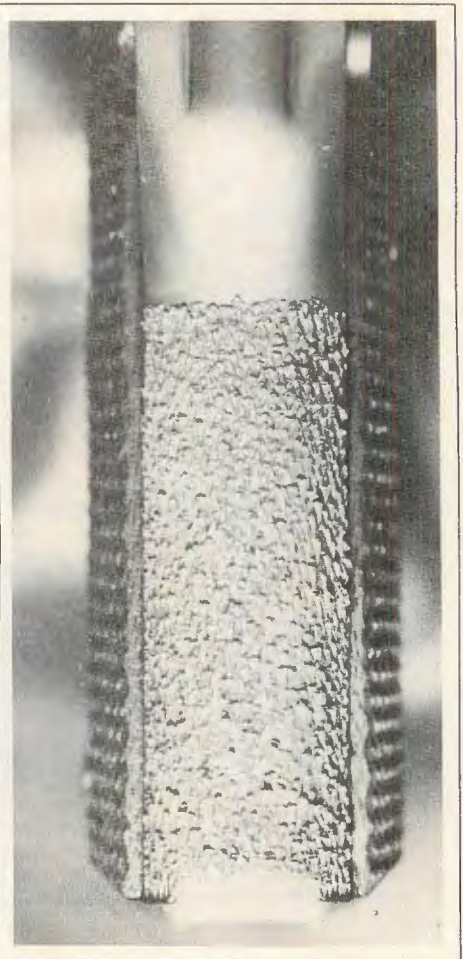
One problem was noted with the trigger. Occasionally, when firing on the range, the trigger would fail to return to engage the sear. The weapon was returned to Behlert for adjustment, where the problem was rectified post haste: This brings up one of those rules that you should engrave on the inside of your forehead. *Test fire any weapon that you intend to carry or use in competi-*



Above: Behlert did a fine job of installing the Smith and Wesson "K" sight. Note allen head screw that secures sight to frame, behind ejection port.

tion before the fact. Any weapon new from the factory or new from the gunsmith should be wrung out rigorously before you entrust it with the outcome of a match or the defense of your life!

The normal functioning modifications are evident on the silvery Colt. The feed ramp is polished, the ejection port is opened up and the Bar-Sto barrel, as a standard feature, is throated. These modifications allow the Behlert .45 to feed empty .45 cases without a hitch.



Above: Behlert stippling of front of frame is well done and functional. Front of trigger guard is also stippled.

Then it will function with almost any bullet style without failure.

For those battered souls who have suffered the "Colt Hammer Bite" syndrome on the web of their shooting hands, Behlert lengthens the grip safety to protect this tender area. He then installs a Commander Hammer. This combination of features virtually eliminates hammer bite. Those afflicted by the "CHB" syndrome may now rejoice.

The grip safety has been pinned into the frame, thus deactivating this safety feature. In theory, if the shooter does not grip the weapon properly on a fast draw, the grip safety may not be depressed sufficiently to deactivate it and, of course, pinning the grip safety permanently deactivates it. I have never seen the value of this idea for my own use, and I advise against such a modification for a duty-to-defensive weapon. For strictly competition, if you have a problem with the grip safety on your weapon, a rubber band wrapped around the frame over the grip safety will give the same result. My

Ejection port is enlarged and shaped to facilitate positive ejection of spent cases.





Extended grip safety and Colt Commander hammer eliminate "hammer bite syndrome." Swenson safety is worth expense as it allows gun to be put into action more rapidly. Note pinned (deactivated) grip safety.



The reshaped trigger guard gives the index finger of the weak hand a solid perch.

own solution to this problem is to concentrate on achieving a good grip on the .45 each and every time I draw.

A Swenson ambidextrous safety graces the piece. This relatively expensive little item does indeed speed up the process of thumb safety manipulation and is invaluable to south paws, but I've seen a lot of fine competitors win matches with the stock Colt safety.

The trigger guard on Brown's custom auto has been reshaped and stippled to accommodate the fashionable (and

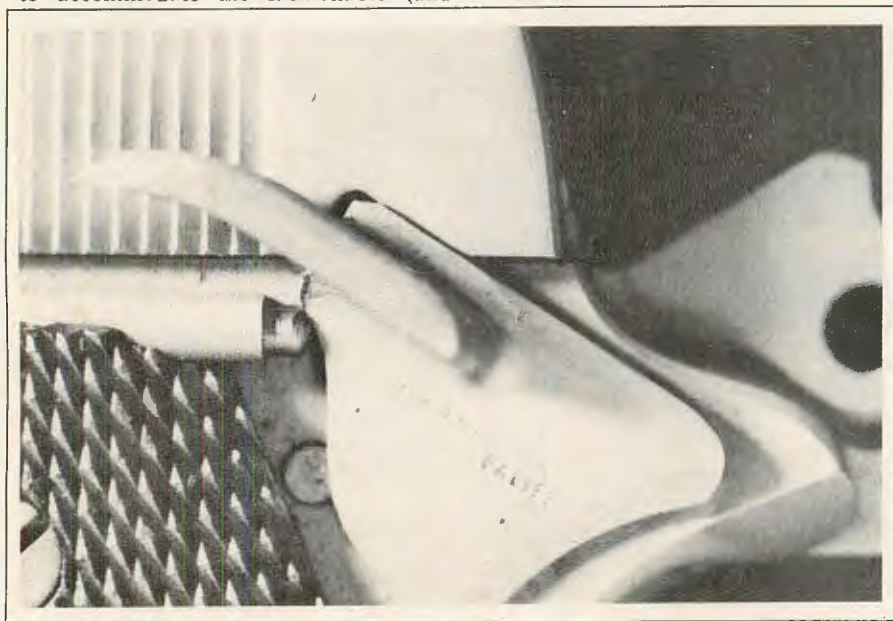
solid) left-index-finger-in-front-of-the-trigger-guard grip. The new shape of the front of the trigger guard creates a shallow hook which provides a secure seat for the index finger. The stippling is sharp and very nicely done.

The front of the grip area of the frame is stippled sharply and attractively. Aesthetically, I have always preferred checkering, which is more expensive than stippling, but it is not necessarily more effective in providing a non-slip surface.

A beveled magazine well facilitates a speed reload. The resulting bevel acts like a funnel, giving you a slightly larger opening to hit with a fresh magazine.

Accompanying Brown's Behlert customized piece was a Ranger holster, magazine pouch and belt combo, put out by Ranger Leather Products, Inc., P.O. Box 3198, East Camden, Arkansas 71701. A lot of thought was put into this outfit. The Ranger holster is designed for security and protection of the weapon. The sample provided was finished in a polished green and brown camouflage motif. The obviously military appearance of this Ranger outfit is entirely functional and equally at home in the backwoods of the Rocky Mountains as in overseas battlefields. (This outfit will be covered in more detail in my next column.)

There you have it. I've attempted to give you a critique of a specific weapon from a specific gunsmith as well as a critique of .45 auto pistol modifications in general. I've tried to be as critical as possible about each modification to help you differentiate between the absolutely necessary, the almost necessary, the



Swenson Safety on this Behlert .45 is relatively expensive, but makes quick handling of the Colt even quicker.

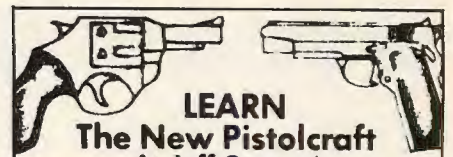
nice-to-have, and the luxury modifications which are available.

Spend as little or as much as you want, but please shop for a competent gunsmith. Look at his work, talk to his customers, and read his menu with an eye for the prices. Also, be aware that when you receive the package containing your customized pride and joy, your wait is not necessarily finished. Sure, the piece may fit you like a pigskin glove, but

chances are that some small idiosyncrasy may rub you the wrong way. A competent gunsmith, like Behlert, knows this and will work with you to tailor that weapon to fit your needs and your personality. The result is well worth the effort—a precision tool that fits both you and the task at hand.



The unique camouflaged Ranger holster, belt and magazine pouch which accompanied the Behlert .45 for testing will be evaluated in next issue.



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Initial blast. Charge detonated from outside to center. 127 pounds of gelatin dynamite were placed in 257 locations.



Elevator shaft, in center of building, is separated from building. Structure is collapsing on its foundations.



Eleven seconds after detonation, Donovan has created a mound of broken brick, twisted steel, splintered wood and shattered glass.

by Devin Benson
 127 lbs. of gelatin Dynamite
 + John Donovan =
 1000s of tons of rubble

On 16 March 1977, near Wood-
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 John Donovan demonstrated how
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 Donovan's "Tender Loving Care"
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 tion, 120 feet, was the elevator
 shaft, located in the front center;
 the remainder of the building was
 85 feet high.

The massive building, con-
 structed in 1917, at one time
 housed 1500 employees. The tan-
 nery operation was terminated in
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 purchased the property for future
 refinery expansion.

Shell executives determined it
 would be far less costly to blow
 the building than use convention-
 al means of demolition. They con-
 tacted Donovan, who had explos-
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 Donovan, who is also a structural
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 with 13 separate delays. Eleven
 seconds after detonation, the tan-
 nery was a pile of rubble. This
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 five bridges in the Midwest.

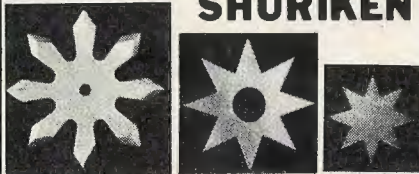
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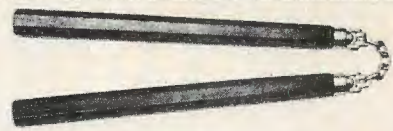
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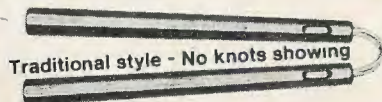


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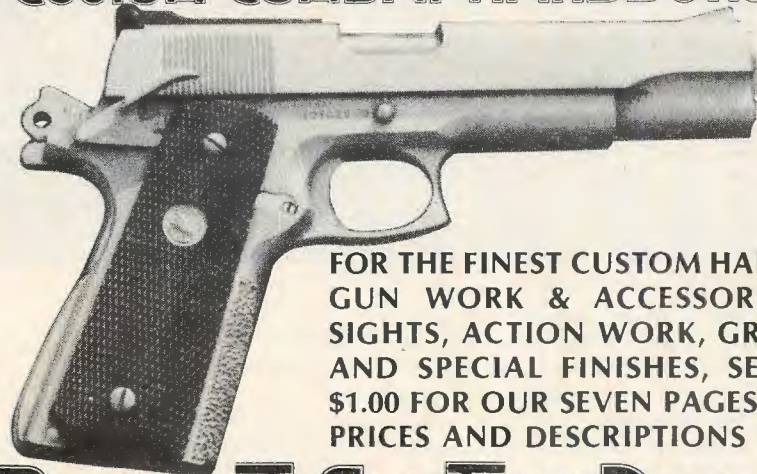


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Ed Arthur ~ Soldier of Fortune

PART TWO

THE SILENT CONSPIRACY

by John M. Lesar

A large, green Ford turned slowly at the Howard Johnson's Motor Inn and pulled up in front of the restaurant where Ed Arthur stood waiting, his collar turned up against the brisk, February wind.

Ed opened the door and got in.

The slender, hawk-faced man behind the wheel looked over his new passenger, then leaned over to introduce himself.

"I'm Tom Decker, FBI."

"Ed Arthur."

They shook hands.

Decker put the car in gear again and pulled slowly past the front of the motel on the north edge of Columbus, Ohio. He pulled into a parking space at the side.

Decker sized up Arthur again.

"You got a piece?"

"Don't need one."

"Any recording devices?"

"Nope."

"You don't mind if I just kind of pat you down and check, do you?"

Ed opened his coat.

"Be my guest."

Decker made a quick frisk.

"Okay." He said. "Now, this bribe stuff."

Ed outlined again a meeting at Fort Carson, Colorado, where he had been an instructor at the Army's Recondo School. Ed had been offered \$25,000.00 for information on Cuban missile installations. He was told the information was being gathered for use in the Democratic 1972 presidential campaign. Ed refused and reported the offer to his supervisors, charging it was an attempt to bribe a government employee.

Ed's report of the offer had kicked about in the bureaucracy for years.

In 1973, Ed Arthur was called before the Senate Watergate Committee to testify about the incident. But little came of his appearance before the committee.

In January of 1974, Ed Arthur wrote to Representative John Ashbrook,

R-Ohio, reviewing the bribe offer and asking that some legal action be taken and that the matter be given further investigation. That letter was turned over to the Justice Department, which arranged for the February meeting between Decker and Arthur.

But the two men's conversation soon swayed from political tricks to other matters on Decker's mind.

And primary on Decker's mind at the time was the Bottoms of west Columbus, Ed Arthur's boyhood home.

Decker said several residents of the Bottoms area were suspected in an interstate bank robbery ring. He asked if Ed had heard any rumors or barroom gossip about the operation.

Ed said he hadn't.

The two discussed the area and where such people would be likely to congregate — and possibly brag about their exploits.

Ed named a couple of bars. But Decker wanted more.

"Look," the agent said, leaning toward Ed. "You've got a hell of a service record. You were a damn good soldier and a good cop. We can use people like you. We need help."

Ed was reluctant.

WORK FOR THE FBI?

"To be honest, I've never really trusted the Bureau. I knew too many policemen who've had nothing but grief."

"We've had our problems. Sometimes we haven't seen eye to eye with local police. There've been some hard feelings. I admit that. But we're all tryin' to do the same job. Deep down, we all want the same thing."

Ed was silent.

"There's more than just this bank robbery business," Decker continued. "There's white slavery — drug peddling — and it's all being run right out of the Bottoms."

Ed shrugged.

"That's nothing new."

"But it doesn't have to stay that way. You're a trained law officer. And you're from the Bottoms. You can get into places where we can't. You can find out what we can't. Maybe you can help change it. Make it better. All we're asking is that you give it a try."

Ed thought for a moment.

"Look," he told him. "I'm on disability. I've got a family. I can't go gallivanting around the Bottoms. I just haven't got the money to go hopping around doing your intel work."

Decker reassured him that any money Ed spent in the course of his investigations would be reimbursed by the Bureau.

But Ed was less than convinced.

"It's been a long time since I've been around the West Side," Ed told him. "A lot of things have changed. There's new people. New scams."

"But you still have friends there."

Ed nodded.

"All we're asking is that you keep your eyes open. And if you dig up anything, give us a call."

"I might be able to do that. I'll think about it."

"Okay."

"But no promises," Ed interrupted.

"No promises," Decker agreed.

"KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN"

Decker drove Ed back to where Ed had parked his car and the two said goodbye.

For about a week, Ed mulled over Decker's request. In late February 1974, he telephoned Decker at the FBI office in Columbus.

"You win," Ed told him. "I'll do it."

Ed Arthur, on patrol in An Khe pass with 9th Cav., 1st Cav. Div. Arthur served two tours in Nam.

Decker thanked him and told Ed he would visit Ed at Arthur's home north of Columbus as soon as possible.

About a week later, Decker paid a visit at Ed's house. But Ed was gone. Decker left his name with Ed's wife.

A few days later, Decker made another stop at the Arthur home. This time, he found Ed at home alone.

The two spent nearly an hour reviewing FBI interests in the goings on in the Bottoms. A tri-state bank robbery ring believed operated by several Bottoms' toughs and a drug-white-slavery ring also believed operated through the Bottoms were chief on the list.

Ed warned that some of the tasks could involve him in dangerous situations. He showed Decker the .38 police special he had carried while on duty with the Teller County, Colorado, sheriff's police and asked if arrangements could be made for him to carry the weapon.

"If I'm getting into what I think I'm getting into, I want to be able to protect myself without getting my ass thrown in the slammer," Ed told Decker.

"No problem."

"I WANT TO PROTECT MYSELF"

Decker handed Ed his card and jotted down his home phone number. He said if Ed was ever held on a weapons charge by local police, he should have the department call him and the matter would be dropped.

Ed spent the following 16 months tracking down leads for the FBI. Most of his work centered on a white slavery ring that hooked young women on drugs, then forced them into prostitution to support the habit.

But things changed quickly in July 1975.

In mid-July, Ed received a telephone call from Daniele Pierre Waltener, who described himself in a thick French accent as a member of the Wild Geese, an international association of mercenaries.

Waltner said he had seen Ed on a television show about the Cuban exile movement and that he would like to talk to him about the mercenary movement in Angola.

Ed made arrangements to visit Waltener at Waltener's home in Newark, Ohio, about 20 miles outside Columbus.

Ed made the trip the following week.

Waltener, a fast-talking, muscular man in his early 30s, met him at the door.

WILD GEESE IN ANGOLA

The Frenchman explained that he had been involved with the French army in Algeria, fought as a mercenary in the Congo, and had served in the U.S. Army Airborne in Vietnam. He said he headed the Wild Geese Association and that the Association had several thousand experienced mercenaries ready to fight in Angola. He said he was negotiating with

C.O.R.E. for a contract to send some 300 mercenaries to Angola to join forces with UNIDA, one of the two pro-western factions in the Angolan civil conflict. Waltener also said he was seeking new recruits to expand the Wild Geese and asked Ed if he would like to join.

Ed said he was interested and would consider the proposal.

Waltener rattled on for several hours about his experiences in Algeria, both with the French army and with the OAS mercenary force and his involvement in OAS efforts to raise funds and to assassinate Charles deGaulle. He also reminisced about his experiences in the Congo, Oman, Biafra, and Vietnam.

The following morning, Ed telephoned Tom Decker and advised him of Waltener's enterprises. Decker told him to put together whatever information he could on Waltener's recruiting operations and to file a report.

During the next several months, Ed nurtured a friendship with the Frenchman, though deftly avoiding any commitment to the Wild Geese or Waltener's planned Angolan excursion.

Ed also was working up a profile on Waltener and his Wild Geese.

"DO YOU KNOW WALTENER?"

Ed contacted several old associates involved in or close to the mercenary movement to gather intelligence on Waltener. As the information accumulated, Waltener's credibility evaporated. He was looking more and more like a simple braggart.

But Ed was never quite sure. He maintained close contact with Waltener.

And Waltener regularly pressed Ed for a commitment to the Wild Geese and the outfit's planned Angolan campaign.

Waltener particularly wanted Ed's assistance in press relations. He was impressed by the two books and several newspaper and magazine articles written about Arthur and hoped to have his own biography published. He frequently urged Ed to put him in contact with writers and publishers who might be interested in his life story.

Ed strung him along and the two met or talked together frequently.

Waltener was visiting Ed in mid-September 1975 when Ed was visited by a representative of the owners of St. Vincent Island in the Caribbean. The island's owners had asked Ed to devise a plan for an island security force and Waltener listened silently as Ed outlined his proposals.

WALTENER HORNS IN

As Ed talked, Waltener was devising some plans of his own.

By October, Waltener's plans to land a contract for the defense of St. Vincent's were complete.

In early October, Ed, seeking to expand his knowledge of the mysterious M. Waltener, invited the Frenchman to accompany him on a trip to Cincinnati.

Waltener jumped at the chance, and quickly set up some business of his own, setting a meeting with representatives of St. Vincent's island to discuss a proposal for Wild Geese to handle the training and staffing of the island security force.

The two men whiled away the drive to Cincinnati with war stories — mostly Waltener's — and a recital of Waltener's problems with the Veterans Administration.

But Ed noted that Waltener was getting increasingly aggressive in efforts to add Ed's name to the roster of the Wild Geese.

By the time the two reached Cincinnati, Waltener's harpings were beginning to get on Ed's nerves. And the Frenchman's rantings seemed to be getting worse.

"Remember, I don't just need you. We need each other. We're a team," he argued.

"Not yet we aren't."

Ed's response triggered a long, sullen silence.

By the time they arrived at the Cincinnati home where they were to stay, the tension had peaked.

SHOWDOWN IN CINCINNATI

And the showdown would not be long in coming.

Waltener's attitude was openly derisive when the topic of Ed and the Wild Geese came up in conversation with several other persons.

"He's thinking about it, he's thinking about it," Waltener chimed, mimicking Ed's customary answer to his entreaties for Ed to join up. "Damned slowest mind I ever saw."

Ed was rigid. "Shutup."

"Why. Are you thinking?"

"I'm warning you, Daniele. Let it go."

"The thinker speaks."

"Daniele!"

"Think; think, think. Silence. Gotta..."

Ed's fist slashed up and forward, catching the Frenchman squarely in the face. Blood gushed from a deep gash in his flesh.

Ed cocked his arm for another blow but stayed it.

The Frenchman reached instinctively for the pearl-handled revolver he carried in a shoulder holster. Ed stopped him with a stare.

Bleeding, Waltener got up and staggered to the bathroom.

Ed turned and walked away.

Several other residents of the house helped the bleeding Frenchman tend his injured face.

"I lost my train of thought and it hit him in the face," Ed told the others.

Waltener, sheepish and sullen, emerged from the bathroom about a half-hour later with a bandage on his bruised face. He and Ed exchanged glances, then he left for a meeting to discuss his proposal for a security force of St. Vincent's island.

Ed went about his business.

When the two men met later, the incident was not mentioned. But Waltener was more restrained — and still seemed somewhat sullen.

"THE OFFER STILL STANDS"

Waltener told Ed his offer still stood and that he wanted Ed in the Wild Geese. But he would no longer pressure Ed for a decision.

The following month, Ed received a telephone call from Lobo del Sol, an old friend from California.

The young Vietnam vet told Ed that he had joined a mercenary group destined for Angola and asked Ed if he wanted to get in on the action.

Lobo said a man named David Bufkin was recruiting mercenaries for commando-type operations to knock out guerrilla camps in Venezuela and for action with the FNLA in Angola.

Ed advised Lobo to steer clear of the recruiting, and outlined his experiences with Waltener. But Lobo was sure of his operation, and confident of Bufkin.

Ed agreed to come out and check things out himself.

Later, Ed called Tom Decker and outlined Bufkin's California recruiting and the planned operations in Africa and South America.

Decker asked Ed to follow up the report. Ed said he planned to travel to California to talk with Lobo and gather more information about Bufkin but that it would take money to finance the operation. He reminded Decker that, so far, he had been given only \$60 for expenses incurred during the past 20 months and that he had spent much more than that in his work for the Bureau.

Decker explained that the vouchers for expenses had been held up in Cincinnati and assured Ed that the money due Ed, plus expenses for the California trip, would be paid soon.

In late November, Ed borrowed \$1,000 and headed for California to meet with Lobo.

When Ed arrived at Lobo's Redondo Beach, California, apartment, he found his old friend highly excited about the prospects for impending adventures.

"We're gonna get at 'em again. How 'bout it! Come on. You in?"

But his enthusiasm was less than contagious.

"I think you gotta be careful," Ed told him. "There's all kinds of kooks runnin' around recruiting. If I was you I'd forget about it."

"You're not. Not by a good 15 years."

"Okay, okay. But at least find out what you're getting into."

"It's a good deal. Really."

BUFKIN'S PITCH

Lobo began outlining the benefits. The salary was unusually high — \$1,500 a month. Air fare was paid roundtrip, with a guarantee that if a recruit arrived and decided he didn't like the operational setup, he could get back on the plane and head home with no charge for the trip. And, Lobo said, he would be able to train and lead his own squad.

But Ed Arthur was not impressed.

"What about the operation, man. I don't want to know about the fringe benefits. What about medics? Equipment? You gonna get any insurance? And who the hell's running the operation? And how? You don't know what kind of a deal you're gettin' 'til you know that."

"Well hell, at least it's another chance to have at the communists. And the damn Cubans are there, man. I thought you'd wanna another crack at them."

Ed Arthur, left, with Angolan merc recruiter David Bufkin before Bufkin and mercs left for Africa.



Ed shook his head.
"I want a crack at 'em. But not at any price."

Lobo shrugged.

"Well, at least it's an operation. I don't see you involved in anything. At least Bufkin's got something going."

"But what?"

"Ask Bufkin."

"I'd like to."

"Then talk to him. I'll introduce you when he calls."

"Okay by me."

"And if it's a sound operation?"

"Then by God I'll join it myself. But don't hold your breath."

"You got a deal."

The two shook hands.

Bufkin called the following day and Lobo was good to his word.

Ed talked at length to Bufkin, who immediately asked him to sign up with the squad for the Angolan conflict.

But Ed peppered Bufkin with questions.

Ed first brought up the escapades of Daniele Pierre Waltener, asking Bufkin if he had ever heard of the man.

Bufkin had.

BUFKIN NIXES WILD GEESE

"Hell, he's in Tucson. But he's a nut. And a liar. Don't trust him. He's been talkin' to me about getting some people from his ruptured ducks or whatever that outfit is in Angola for the FNLA. But the bastard's talking ridiculous money. And he ain't yet come up with a name. He's a fraud. And I don't think he did all those things he said he did in Algeria and the Congo. Just a lotta wind."

"What about your operation?"

"We're straight. Been working outta Zaire. I just come back to rustle up some more people. We need people and we got the money to buy the best. And we want the best."

Bufkin outlined the terms — \$1,500 a month, air fare and a system under which experienced soldiers like Arthur would train and lead their own troops into combat.

But Ed had more questions.

"Where's the money come from?"

"I can't tell you that. It's classified. But money's no problem. It's there. Lots of it."

"What kind of personnel are you getting? How are they qualified — Recondo, Airborne, Ranger?"

"We've got experienced people. All combat qualified. We've got some Recondo, some Airborne qualified."

"What about the government? We gonna get any hassles from Uncle Sam?"

"No problem. I can guarantee there'll be absolutely no government interference." Bufkin laughed slyly.

Ed asked about hospital care, insurance, the treatment of wounded and their

return to the United States. Bufkin's answers seemed vague, sometimes evasive.

"And what about weapons?"

"No problem. All American. Top stuff."

"But exactly what have you got?"

"I can't get into that. But it's enough to do the job. More than enough."

But Bufkin's answers were not enough to sell Ed Arthur.

When the conversation ended, Ed looked at Lobo and shook his head.

"Well, what?" Lobo asked.

"GET THE FUCK OUT"

"My advice to you is to get the fuck outta this thing. It stinks. This Bufkin is a clown. He doesn't know what he's doing."

"But at least he's doing something," Lobo snapped. "It's more than I can say for some people."

"It's your ass. But if you wanna keep it outta the fire you better steer clear."

"It's my ass."

"Have it your way."

Lobo didn't seem as enthusiastic as he had. But he was still determined to join Bufkin on an Angolan battlefield.

But to both Ed and Lobo, the topic was closed. Each had made up his mind. And each knew it would be an exercise in futility to try to change the other's decision.

Several days later, Daniele Pierre Waltener telephoned Ed Arthur at Lobo's apartment.

He had another recruitment pitch.

The Frenchman explained that he was in Tucson trying to recruit black soldiers to join the UNIDA force in Angola. He said he had the operation ready to go and that he still wanted Ed.

"It's all lined up. We're on standby ready to roll. And we need you."

Waltener again reviewed the financial arrangements.

"There's money to be made. It's there for the taking and we might as well take it. If we don't somebody else will."

But Ed explained that he had other commitments at the moment and couldn't take on any new assignments.

"But keep me advised," Ed told him.

Ed told Waltener he had talked to Dave Bufkin and that Bufkin had also tried to recruit him.

"DON'T TRUST THE BASTARD"

"Don't trust the bastard. He's a fake. He doesn't know what the hell he's doing," Waltener told Ed, his words rushing a mile a minute.

"What has Bufkin got? Nobody. He's recruiting boys," the Frenchman continued. "His people don't have experience. Maybe a little time in Vietnam — if that. They aren't mercenaries. I've got the professionals. Guys from the Congo,

IN RETROSPECT

by Ed Arthur

The American mercenary is the product of betrayal — the offspring of political prostitution.

He is the patriot of a nation governed in secret, swayed by the everchanging, often wanton tides of clandestine policy and backroom deals, the pawn in the often ridiculous, frequently diabolical, game called international diplomacy.

The mercenary is both product and symbol of an era of disillusionment — an era whose brief history began with Korea, was molded by the Cold War, and ended in humiliation in Vietnam.

To the American male, conditioned from childhood to win, raised with pride and self-esteem, Vietnam was a final, ego-killing putdown—a putdown taken personally by many who fought there.

When slapped in the face with surrender—stripped even of the solace of dignity in valiant defeat—many reacted with frustration, anger, and the emptiness of political impotence.

Patriotism was broken by the weight of spineless political appeasers who wavered with every ripple of public opinion, hiding from any firm commitment. A war that could have been won was forfeited—not lost—through political backsliding and flimflamming.

The soldiers of a nation, leaderless and undirected, were left to seek their own direction.

For many, the direction was back to the battlefield—to confront their vanquishers and prove they were still willing to fight, and confident in victory. Their individual decisions created a growing band of American mercenaries.

They increase each time the government chooses to deal instead of decide, to compromise instead of commit, to waver instead of stand firm, and to back down instead of confronting its challenges.

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Biafra. Old Africa hands. Bufkin's a fool. He's selling those boys. Collecting \$400 for everybody he recruits. He doesn't care who he sends. Just so he gets his money."

Ed told Waltener he also had a low opinion of Bufkin and would advise anyone to avoid him.

"And that Lobo too," Waltener warned. "He's a crazy one. He doesn't know what he's doing. He's recruiting for Bufkin and he doesn't care what happens. He's crazy, that one."

"Well, he's not recruiting me," Ed said. "What he does is his own business."

"But watch him. He's a crazy one."

"I will."

Ed explained he would be wrapping up business in California for the next few weeks but that Waltener could reach him at Lobo's if anything came up.

Ed spent nearly a month in California, carefully monitoring Bufkin's activities while explaining to anyone who asked that he was in the area to try to sell the movie industry on a book written about him.

He talked to Bufkin about half a dozen times during his stay with Lobo, but the conversations were brief.

Most of his information came from Lobo, who kept him abreast of happenings as the operations heated up.

By mid-December, several persons had been recruited for the South American operation.

The recruits so far were Lobo, Gary Acker, a former Marine from Sacramento, California, and Bill Clinch, a "professional soldier."

Sources have since indicated that Clinch was an alias for a veteran CIA hand who had participated in a number of Company operations in Latin America.

Ed returned to Columbus shortly before Christmas and began assessing the information he had gathered.

On December 30, he contacted Tom Decker and outlined Bufkin's operation. He told Decker of the plan for the commando operation against the Venezuelan communists and provided the names of those involved. He also gave Decker a detailed report on Angolan recruitment, though he was unable to provide information on when the recruits would be leaving the country.

"GET INFO ON BUFKIN"

Later that afternoon, Decker phoned Ed and asked him to get more deeply involved in Bufkin's operation and gather more detailed information.

Ed indicated that Bufkin was still trying to recruit him for the operations and that he would play along to gather further information.

Bufkin and Lobo telephoned Ed frequently about the operation, Bufkin to entice Ed to join the group, and Lobo just to keep Ed abreast of what was happening.

Ed continued to advise Lobo to end his involvement with Bufkin and forget the operation but Lobo was firm in his determination to get into the fight.

Ed kept in contact with Decker, who told him his information on Bufkin's activities had been passed on to Decker's superiors.

In late January, Ed contacted Decker with new information. In all, he said, Bufkin had recruited five persons for Angola: Lobo del Sol and Gary Acker, both of whom had also been recruited for the later-aborted South American mission. The other recruits were Gustave Marcelo Grillo, an Argentine-American and Vietnam veteran, and Danny Gearhart, a Vietnam vet from Maryland who had placed an ad in *Soldier of Fortune*, seeking mercenary employment, and George Bacon, a former CIA operative and military man.

FIVE FOR ANGOLA

Bacon was already in Angola and arrangements were being made for Gearhart, Grillo and del Sol to join him soon.

On February 2, 1976, Ed Arthur met with Decker at the Columbus FBI office.

Ed was told a new agent would be handling his information and was introduced to agent Steve Glazer. The three men sat down for a two-hour conference and briefing.

Ed reviewed his information with Glazer and added that Bufkin recruits Gearhart, Acker and del Sol were to leave for New York that day on the first leg of their trip to Angola.

Glazer wired to Los Angeles FBI office which reported the three had been under surveillance and were still in the Los Angeles area.

The information proved wrong.

On February 3, 1976, the four recruits left New York for Africa.

Within a week, Gearhart and Acker had been captured. They had never fired a shot.

Grillo also was captured. Bacon was killed.

The FNLA was collapsing. Luanda was in communist hands and the country was being taken by storm in an armored assault by Cuban forces.

Casualties and captures had reduced the FNLA to a token force and the pro-western troops resorted to hit-and-run tactics to prolong the war effort.

In a last ditch effort to bolster the sagging resistance, Lobo del Sol was called in from the field and sent on an emergency mission to the United States. Lobo's orders were to contact Daniele Pierre Waltener and ask for his Wild Geese troops.

LOBO'S STATESIDE MISSION

But it was a futile mission in search of a phantom Army.

Lobo had only the money entrusted to him by his comrades for deposit in the United States, but was told by the FNLA command to use the money for his own expenses on the trip. They promised he would be sent more money and the money he had been given by his comrades would be given to them as soon as they returned from the field.

With the crisp, new \$100 bills in his pocket, Lobo del Sol left Angola. He would never return.

On February 13, 1976, Lobo met with Waltener at the Eastland Shopping Center in Columbus.

At 11:00 a.m., the two met in a coffee shop.

Lobo twisted his flowing mustache and stared the Frenchman in the eyes.

"We'll meet your price. We want your men. Now."

Waltener fiddled with the black leather gloves that had become his trademark and adjusted his shoulder holster, providing a glimpse of the pearl-handled revolver he carried.

"So now you come begging to Waltener, eh? Just like that. 'We're in trouble. Save us.'"

"GIMME THE MEN NOW"

"Fuck you. You want money. We got it. Just gimme the men. Now."

"I have the men. It is no problem. But the terms?"

"Name your fuckin' terms. I want the men. Just gimme the fuckin' list."

"In time."

"That's what I haven't got. Ed Arthur's coming in a half hour. Now I want that list. You got your terms. Come clean."

"These things are not so quickly arranged."

"You lyin' little bag of shit." Lobo's voice was a crackling hiss. "You ain't got a damn thing. Just a fucking little liar. All you got is a cut pair o' gloves and a big fuckin' mouth. Get the fuck outta my face."

"Listen. I won't take that. You need me."

"You eat shit. Just get outta my face before I knock your shitty little head off."

"You can't threaten me. You want you want. You come begging then you threaten. I'm not alone here. I have my men."

"Fuck you and your playmates and the horse you rode in on. If you're not outta my sight, your little friends are gonna have to carry you out. And you better have six of 'em. That box gets heavy."

"Fool," Waltener spat.


He stomped out.

Lobo felt numb, weak.

LAST HOPE GONE

The last hope of the FNLA had evaporated with the phantom Frenchman and he could feel the knot in his gut that he had been hiding for more than a day.

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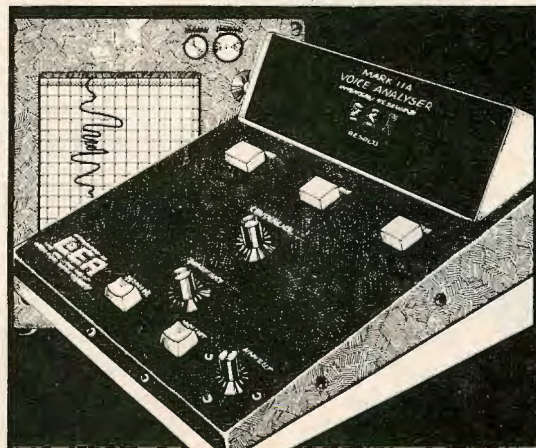
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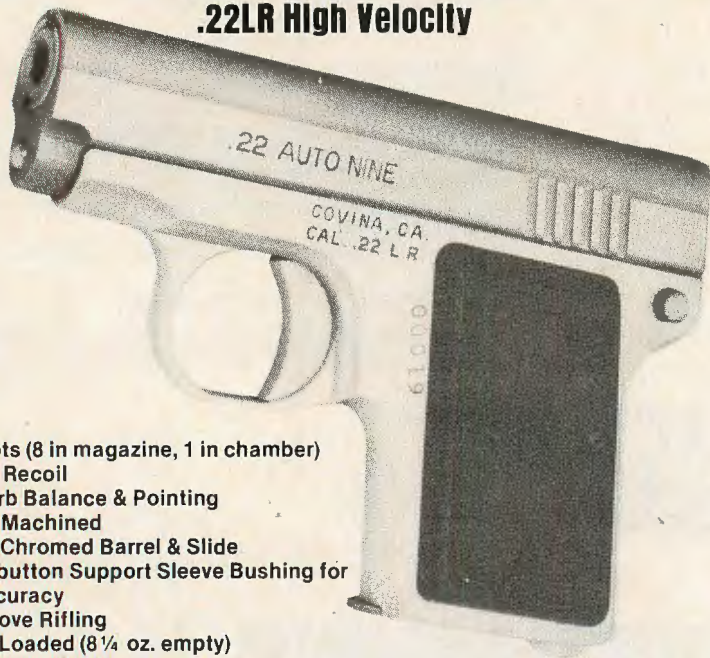
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Dysentery. He knew it. His face and head were burning and his gut was in knots.

Lobo sipped his coffee and waited for Ed.

Ed pulled into the parking lot shortly before noon and Waltener wheeled his Cadillac up beside Ed's car.

"Get in. I have something important to tell you," the Frenchman said.

"I haven't got much time, Daniele. I've got a meeting in a minute."

"DON'T MEET WITH LOBO"

"Don't meet with Lobo."

"What?"

"Don't meet with Lobo. Something bad's gonna happen. You don't want to be there. That's a warning."

"Whaddya mean?"

"Some guys in the mall have him under surveillance. He's in trouble."

"Who's got him under surveillance?"

"I can't tell you."

"Your guys?"

"All I can tell you is that I have connections. With the FBI and the CIA. And I know he's in trouble."

"If Lobo is in trouble, then I know I'm going in there. And if Lobo gets hurt on account of anything you do, this fuckin' world won't be big enough for you to fuckin' hide in."

"Well, if you go, you go at your own risk."

Ed got out of the car and left.

He met Lobo inside the coffee shop, but his old friend was pallid.

The two left for Lobo's room at the Holiday Inn. They visited for a time, with Ed urging Lobo several times to see a doctor. Lobo kept saying he was all right.

Ed found his efforts to convince Lobo to see a doctor were hopeless. So he convinced the sick merc to go down to the restaurant with him to have something hot to eat, hoping that might ease his stomach pain.

The two were having lunch when Tom Decker and Steve Glazer walked in. The two agents looked shocked to find Ed at the table.

ENTER THE FBI

Decker walked up to Ed and called him aside while Glazer stayed at the table with Lobo.

"What the hell are you doin' here?" Decker demanded.

"Havin' lunch."

Decker pointed to Lobo.

"He just got back in the country."

"Right. Last night. He called me first thing this mornin'."

"Is he CIA?"

"You better just leave it alone and get the hell outta here. How did you know we were here?"

"We got a phone tip."

"Did the caller have a heavy French accent?"

Decker grinned.

"I can't answer that."

"I can," he chuckled.

Meanwhile, Lobo and Glazer were having a quiet conversation.

Glazer pressed Lobo several times, asking if he was connected with the Company and if the Angolan operation was CIA.

"I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY"

Lobo simply told them: "I don't have anything to say to you people."

The agents left in about 10 minutes and Ed returned to the table with Lobo. They noticed almost simultaneously that Glazer had left his hat on the chair.

"Oh," said Lobo. "The poor silly. Shall I help him out. I'm gonna give that sucker personal service."

Lobo picked up the hat and headed for the door, where he caught up with Glazer.

"Pardon me, but you seem to have forgotten your hat," Lobo said with a mock politeness that seemed to translate, "Don't let the door hit you in the ass on the way out."

He and Ed laughed.

Lobo was preparing for his return to Angola and the fighting when Angola fell. He was crestfallen.

"I QUIT"

On February 17, 1976, Ed Arthur phoned Steve Glazer and informed him that he was terminating his relationship with the Bureau. Ed was distraught at the fall of Angola, the fates of the men he had watched being recruited. And he was angry over the Bureau's failure to reimburse his expenses.

Ed had tried on several occasions to recover the expense money promised him. Promise after promise was made and promise after promise was broken. He was fed up.

Ed turned his attention to helping the captured mercenaries while the FBI was left to conduct its own investigation of the Angolan fiasco.

Ed Arthur, *Soldier of Fortune* Publisher Bob Brown and Lobo del Sol joined in raising funds and recruiting an attorney to defend the captured American mercs. Attorney Robert Cesner of Columbus, Ohio, was finally chosen and hired by Gary Acker's family.

He took a quick, crash course in international law at Ohio State University, then dashed off for Luanda.

Cesner's one-hour and 20-minute summing-up speech on behalf of white mercenaries before an African People's Court was hailed as "a masterpiece, the best possible defense," by Kermit Coleman, a Chicago civil rights lawyer who observed the trial.

Cesner was also praised by the presiding judge for his earnest, dignified conduct in the People's Court, and the

law school at Luanda University has asked for copies of his summation.

Even the government-controlled newspapers credited him for "restoring a balance" after the people's prosecutor spent three hours and 36 minutes denouncing mercenarism, imperialism and the CIA, and only four minutes dealing with the specific charges.

Cesner managed to save Acker from execution, though all three Americans were convicted along with 10 other mercs for crimes against the people of Angola.

While Cesner was fighting for the mercs, the FBI was looking into the recruitment.

FBI PROBES SOF

Agents conducted a thorough probe of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine, which some had charged was a front for mercenary recruitment operations. Gearhart's ad seeking mercenary employment had appeared in SOF and Waltener's Wild Geese group's ads had appeared regularly in the magazine. But the agency could find no evidence to indicate that SOF was involved in recruitment and could find no illegal activity on the part of the magazine.

On July 6, 1976, from a jail cell in Luanda, Danny Gearhart penned a letter to his wife and four children in Maryland.

"This will be my last letter to you, because I know I'm going to die," Gearhart wrote. "I'm just one of those people who never made go. It will be very hard on you all, and it is all my fault, as most everything that has gone wrong has been. All I can say is that I'm sorry and I wish I could make it up to you . . ."

TOO LATE FOR GEARHART

Four days later, Gearhart and three British mercs were marched before a firing squad in a Luanda soccer field and executed.

The entreaties of the State Department and the President of the United States had failed to alter the verdict of the Angolan People's tribunal, which had ordered the executions of Gearhart and three Britons and imposed long prison terms on nine other defendants — including Americans Gary Acker of Sacramento, California, and Gustave Marcelo Grillo, an Argentine-American from New Jersey.

President Gerald R. Ford denounced the execution of Gearhart. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger warned that Gearhart's death would be a major obstacle to normalization of relations between the United States and the new communist government of Angola and Angolan admission to the United Nations.

Senator Charles McMathias, R-Maryland, was en route to Angola to plead for Gearhart's life when the firing squad carried out the tribunal's sentence. He was too late.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Steele holds a Master's degree in Police Science. He served as rifle and pistol instructor for the National Rifle Assoc., and as supervisor for the Police Weapons Center Project at the International Assoc. of Chiefs of Police. Steele, an accomplished fencer, has written several books on small arms.

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French Foreign Legion Today

(continued from page 35)

the latrines?" he said. "Latrines are where you shit, shit is dirty so the shit house is dirty." I found this little bit of wisdom repulsive.

We were only allowed to shower twice a week for five minutes, changed our sheets twice in four months, and accepted dogs and cats as eating companions in the mess hall. The old U.S. Army "G.I. Party" was unheard of in the Legion. I never once saw a Legionnaire on all fours scrubbing anything. It was unnecessary because it was not required. Dry cleaning didn't exist. Wool uniforms were merely brushed and ironed by hand. Spit-shining boots and polishing brass were also nonexistent. The French never heard of such things.

I once went to formation wearing a T-shirt beneath my fatigue jacket. An NCO approached me, looked at the T-shirt showing under my neck, and asked me if I was cold. When I didn't understand what he was talking about, he explained that one only wears an undershirt if one is cold. I tried to explain that an undershirt absorbs body perspiration, and since we only had two fatigue shirts it was necessary to keep a clean garment next to my skin. He looked at me dumbfounded, shrugged his shoulders, and walked away

mumbling something about "rich Americans."

The total lack of hygiene became acutely apparent after about 10 days. The slightest cut on one's face or hand swelled overnight into a festering wound. Blood poisoning and hideous skin sores abounded. The medical personnel at the infirmary were unable to offer any prevention. Penicillin was forbidden because it "cost too much." As a result, many recruits were made to endure Legion training, suffering from scores of open, ugly infections that marked their faces and hands.

I once asked my platoon leader, a man whom I respected, why measures were not taken to clean up the camp and provide proper medical treatment for the scores of poor devils caught up in this sickening situation.

He looked at me and said, "We are not like the American Army. We have neither the time, nor the money. France is poor, you must make do as best you can."

"And how about the sheets," I said. "They are turning black from dirt."

"To wash the sheets takes too much water. Run along now, you'll get along: Americans always improvise."

In contrast to the U.S. Army's emphasis on personal and collective hygiene, the Legion placed emphasis on blind obedience. Orders were to be obeyed, without a second thought, and punish-

ment was handed out swiftly to slackers and gold-bricks. *Schlappmacher* (gold bricker), *kamardenschwein* (buddy-fucker), *clodo* (bum), *penner* (German for vagrant), and *salaud* (filth) were words which widened my vocabulary and were usually followed by a sergeant's slap to the face or a kick in the shin.

The Foreign Legion was a world where orders were never questioned. Hard labor was handed out to minor offenders against regulations, entailing confinement to a bedless cell block for a certain number of nights, usually from three to 45, combined with a 12-hour work day digging ditches or moving boulders. Moving boulders seems to have been a favorite pastime on Corsica.

Major offenders were subjected to the *pelote*, an exercise which consists of alternately running and duck-walking around a circle with a pack full of rocks on one's back. The maximum time allotted is 12 minutes. I witnessed only one Legionnaire doing the *pelote* who lasted as long as eight minutes before passing out. He was then dragged to his feet by his ears and kicked back to his cell.

The most serious offenders are sent to the Legion's "Re-education Camp," a penal institution located 2 kms from Corte and officially known as *Le Domaine Saint-Jean*. I would estimate there is no tougher military prison in the western world. If a Legionnaire successfully



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passes his six months there, he is usually given another alias and sent to a different unit. If by chance he is non-educatable, he may be thrown out of the Legion.

Besides emphasis on obedience, importance is also placed on physical conditioning. Forced marches are commonplace, and no one goes through Legion training without soaking his socks more than once with his own blood. Marksmanship was also emphasized. However, only the prone position was used, both during day and night firing exercises. Failure to score well on the rifle range was rewarded by making you somersault the 200 or 300 meters back to the firing line. Scores were checked at the targets, which resulted in the entire firing line running back and forth from the shooting stand to the target after every five-round group.

There was no bayonet training nor were there any night maneuvers. At night, in the dark, someone may sneak off: the Legion was always afraid you were going to desert. That is why you were never paid. During the year I was on Corsica my money went to the bank and I was given an allotment of \$30 or \$40 a month. If you have no money, you can't buy a ticket off the island.

The condition of the weapons was deplorable. Rifle barrels were pitted and cleaning techniques were crude. For

example, bore cleaner was nonexistent, as was rifle oil. Weapons were oiled with 10W30 motor oil and in some cases with crank case oil. Live firing practice was conducted two days a week for 13 weeks.

Time was also spent on the manual of arms and close order drill. In this field the French show a complete lack of imagination. The manual of arms consists of only five commands: Attention, Right Shoulder Arms, Order Arms, Present Arms, and Rest. Despite the simplicity they could never get it right. Marching commands consist of Forward March, Right/Left Turn, and Halt. That's all!

Precision was nonexistent. Close order drill in the Foreign Legion was pathetic! Many times while I paraded with the Legion, I thought of the sweat I had shed on the drill field 10 years previously as a military school cadet, and how we had been instructed to snap our heads to the right on passing the reviewing stand. We never needed to hear the order, only to watch the guidon and count. When the guidon went up, it was the preparatory command of "Eyes." You then said to yourself, "skip-step-right," and on the right snapped the head rightward. We marched by the oblique, did counter turns, and massed companies right and left. In the Legion, it was a major accomplishment to keep everyone in step.

My friend, Brunin, who had served in the Queen's Irish Guards, once remarked, "How do you expect these bloody frogs to do an Eyes Right? They can't even bathe."

What the Legion lacks in sophisticated close order drill, it makes up for by singing. Legionnaires sing everywhere they go. In fact, singing in the Legion is *canonical*. If you march into camp from the day's training and sing poorly, you practice all night.

Hours of your free time are spent marching in place by your bunk, song book in hand, singing at the top of your lungs in French or in German. Most of the time you never knew what the words meant, but singing lifted your spirits, and lightened the load even though it was a pain in the ass.

Aside from this, training was very limited. When I attended U.S. Army basic training, everyone was instructed in first aid, basic map reading, personal and collective hygiene, gas warfare, bayonet training, and basic parade ground commands. I remember how, at Fort Gordon, we would be divided into 10-man squads, and each one would take his turn marching the others around the drill field. This technique allowed every recruit to have a chance to assume a command position, even if only for five or 10 minutes, but the objective was to let the

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in grade was in accordance with how the
individual applied what he had already
learned, his recommendations from im-
mediate superiors, and in some cases
scores on the "Battalion Tests," con-
ducted twice yearly.

In the Legion, only the very basic
instruction was administered to every-
one. Whether one mastered what he was
taught on Corsica was irrelevant. He
could always be used as a floor sweeper.
Advanced training was given only to
those deemed fit by the company com-
mander. This entailed attending an eight-
week Corporal's Course, considered to
be one of the most physically demanding
schools the Legion runs. If one passes
this course, he may be admitted to a
14-week NCO course, after which he will
receive a Chief Corporal's rating and be
placed on probation, awaiting orders to
receive his NCO stripes. To receive the
rank of NCO (Sgt.) in the course of one's
five-year enlistment is exceptional. Many
men spend 15 years in the Legion and
never rise above the grade of Legion-
naire. This is certainly a characteristic
not found in other western armies.

The rank system of the Legion also
creates a strict dividing line between
grades. Legionnaires and Corporals eat
and sleep in the same facilities. Chief
Corporals eat and sleep in the same
facilities as the lower grades but have
separate areas, segregating them from

the others. NCOs live and eat in a sep-
arate building as do the officers. This
French concept of segregation does little
to instill confidence amongst the troops,
especially in the relationship between
NCOs, enlisted personnel, and officers.
The officer corps is so far removed from
the Legionnaire that it makes one wonder
just how many Legion officers have been
shot in the back by their own men.

Foreign Legion officers are French,
and certainly a cut above the regular
French officer corps, but the troops don't
know them, nor trust them. During my
tour in the Legion, I only met four foreign
officers, all in the junior grade. It is cer-
tain that a foreigner in the Legion officer
corps will never pass the rank of captain,
even if he remains in the Legion 30 years.
Despite this, I met some outstanding
officers in the Legion—as well as some
real SOB's.

Once the training period in Bonafacio
had ended we marched 100 kms north
to the town of Corte, arriving in late May,
1972. Most Legionnaires were then sent
to one of the specialty schools operating
in one of the Legion's three posts located
in or near this mountain town.

I was assigned to a 12-week communi-
cations course called "Stage Transmis-
sion." The Stage contained about 40
trainees, some with as much as two
years' service. Again, we were forced
to live in cramped quarters, with barely
enough space to walk between the double
bunks. As the weather had turned hot,
the temperature began to climb, and flies
swarmed over everything. The French
haven't yet heard of window screens.

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I became accustomed to the days' routine. We were allowed showers five times a week and were given ample time to study. As the course was taught in French, studying was mandatory for anyone not knowing the language. The Frogs had no problems and usually sneaked out of the study room in order to drink beer at the bordello. My time here was fully occupied, and the weeks passed quickly; the weekends, however, brought trouble.

If one army in the world has claim to holding a monopoly on alcoholics it's the Legion. The misuse of alcohol is rampant, and although it is officially discouraged, it is simultaneously encouraged. Holidays such as Christmas, New Year's, Kings Festivals, Cameroon, and Bastille Day (July 14), are all celebrated by providing large amounts of beer and wine to people who can't handle it. Beer and wine are also issued at meal time and considered a must for the morning 9 a.m. snack. However, when one shows up drunk for duty, he is thrown in jail for 30 days. While in jail, he is still issued his wine ration, and once he is released, he merely resumes his old habits. Beer is hidden in wall lockers, under beds, and in desk drawers. It is drunk cold, warm, or hot at any time of the day. It's not a drink; it's a drug. The enemy can always follow the Legion simply by following the trail of broken beer bottles.

After the eighth week of Stage Transmission I was convinced I would never make a good communications operator. I had no ear for the Morse Code and could not pass 480 letters per minute, and besides I had now been in the Legion for almost a year.

I asked the Commandant if I could be transferred to the Republic of Djibouti, then officially known as the French Territory of the Afars and Issas, but commonly referred to as just Djibouti. My paperwork was approved and on January 9, 1973, I left the island of Corsica and returned to the transit company of the Legion at Aubagne. There my orders were cut for Djibouti and I was issued my hot weather gear, given shots, and an ill-fitting wool civilian suit. I was told that I had to wear civilian clothes on the trip over, in case the plane was forced down in Egypt or some other country where the French would have to deny transporting troops.

On February 13, 1973, I arrived at the Djibouti Airport and was quickly transported to Camp Gabode, about 2km away, and situated on the outskirts of the city of Djibouti itself. Camp Gabode was occupied by the Command Support and Services Company and the 2nd Work Company of the 13th Demi-Brigade of the Legion. Their function was to provide all the needs for the exterior companies. The "Exteriors," as they were called,

were the peace-keeping forces located in border forts along the frontiers of Somalia and Ethiopia.

The 13th DBLE numbered about 1200 men, each of the four "exterior companies" containing about 150 men, plus the 400 or so personnel stationed at Gabode. The Legion here was still in the 19th century. Troops slept in old, plank-floored, wooden barracks cooled by ceiling fans and surrounded by 15-foot-high hedges. The hedges not only kept out the heat but also the dust.

Clad in my kepi, neck scarf, camouflage jacket, and khaki hot pants, I felt I cut quite a figure and spent my time at Gabode getting used to my new environment. This, I felt, was the real Legion: "Africa, continent of adventure, I have arrived at last."

Bill Brooks served in the U.S. Army, 1963-1966, 82nd Airborne Division—Battery, 320 Artillery, Airborne, Artillery Fire Direction Controller. Saw action in Dominican Republic, Thailand, Vietnam. Wounded in Dominican Republic. Rank: E4 on discharge.



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bulletin board

(continued from page 7)

Sea Diving" (SOF, Summer 1976; Vol. 1, No. 3). Dornan's tribute reads as follows:

"Mr. Speaker, I think it highly appropriate at this time that the country should be aware of the accomplishments and life of an authentic, contemporary American hero, the late George W. Bacon III.

"Mr. Bacon was killed exactly 2 years ago yesterday, St. Valentine's Day, while fighting Cuban mercenaries in Angola. He was only 29 years old, yet he was a man of solid convictions, courage, and with a deep dedication to the principles of freedom, liberty, and human dignity.

"Bacon, a native of Massachusetts, served with distinction as a member of a U.S. Army Special Forces unit in Vietnam after graduating first in his class at Fort Bragg. He later returned to Southeast Asia to work for the Central Intelligence Agency as an adviser to the Royal Laotian military forces. After 2½ years of extremely hazardous duty in Laos, Bacon returned to the United States. He had so impressed his superiors that he was given the CIA's second highest award, the Intelligence Star, for his outstanding performance. He was cited as having been one of the four most highly rated CIA case officers ever to have served in Laos.

"Mr. Bacon resumed his studies, graduating in 1974 summa cum laude from the University of Massachusetts. He was a unique and complex man—a man of action and a man of high intellectual abilities. Following the Communist victories in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, he became very concerned for he knew that the people living under those totalitarian regimes would never enjoy even the most basic of human freedoms.

"In 1976 when Bacon learned of the Communist aggression in Angola, he decided to go there to do what he personally could to prevent another several million people from falling under a Marxist dictatorship—a totalitarian dictatorship imposed upon them by Soviet trained and equipped Cuban troops. In his last letter to his parents, he explained his motivation:

I have discovered that the communists—the MPLA, Russians, and Cubans are going to make a maximum effort to win the war quickly and capture all of Angola. Therefore, I cannot in good conscience sit idly by and watch what is going on without offering whatever help I can to the anti-communist forces . . .

"And so this young American did go to Angola—on his own and not for money, nor for glory or excitement. He went on the principle that a man must do more than just hold principles; a man must live those principles. George Bacon did just that.

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Finally, we have obtained a "professional" subscription fulfillment firm. Any SOFer with subscription problems should write: **SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, C/O Computer Dynamics, Inc., 4044 S. 28th St., Arlington, Virginia 22206. Phone: 703-578-3000.**



H&K 91

(continued from page 28)

Accessories: The H&K factory is extremely up-to-date, utilizing all the most modern equipment and fabrication systems. Its fantastic barrel-hammers, for example, permit absolutely precise barrels to be produced one after another in less than a minute. Similarly modern thought is given to entire families of H&K weapons. Most parts are interchangeable throughout the line, everything fits everything else, and all sorts of combinations can be put together simply by selection. Thus you can have a 91 with or without bipod, with fixed or collapsible stock, with magazines running from 5 to 80 rounds (the latter a double snail which is hard to come by), with iron sights or a whole covey of exotic arrangements mountable topside, and with an excellent 22 conversion kit. Its standard flash suppressor doubles as a missile

launcher. (You cannot, however, switch back and forth from 308 to 223.) My own preference in "state-of-trim" has come to this: retractable stock, bipod, 20-round magazine, carrying strap, corrected ejection, and modified rear sight. Four different technicians have worked on the trigger to no avail. That sheet metal trigger group is just not rigid enough, and if you remove the creep you get doubles—or triples—about once a magazine.

Overall, the HK 91 is an excellent piece. It could be better, as with most of us, but it could also be a lot worse. Probably most important is the fact that you can buy one—for a good bit of loot. If you have need of a piece of this type it is a good buy, because you can't get anything else that will do the same job. With a little effort you can learn to live with its vices, and then fully appreciate its virtues.

If you choose a 91, be very sure that you get the operator's manual with it. Taking that bolt apart is simple if you know how—and impossible if you don't.



Flak

(continued from page 19)

(d) To ensure those that fell in Vietnam are remembered and that the campaign does not fall into obscurity.

Hoping to hear from you, I remain,

Yours faithfully,
Neil Watt
9 Warners Bay Rd.
Warners Bay
Ncle. N.S.W.
Australia 2282

RHODESIAN RESPONSE . . .

Dear Sir:

In your November, 1977 issue of SOF, I noticed that a short story entitled "The Kill" of which I am the author, had been included. . . . Imagine the thrill and immense pleasure that I felt on seeing this story in print in an American magazine. . . .

I am also most interested in corresponding with fellow soldiers in the States and would enjoy entertaining any who come to Rhodesia. . . .

In closing I would like to thank you for your sensible reporting on Rhodesian affairs.

Yours faithfully,
W. S. Pullin (Sgt.)
"Cherwin,"
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Palmerston,
Umtali,
Rhodesia.



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Recce Commandos

(continued from page 43)

party is hand in our kit at the truck and leave the course." Some of the young men are only able to hold their tears of frustration long enough to get out of sight of their instructors. Others curse the charade volubly.

There are a variety of other stratagems, all designed to test the ability and staying power of the Recce hopeful. One evening the men might have sacks placed over their heads and their hands and legs tied behind their backs with heavy cord. I watched one such exercise open-mouthed, for the trainees were left lying on the side of a mountain in the middle of winter and it was up to them to get free — if they could. Those who complained were doused with water from a jerry can.

When we returned three hours later, only four of the original 50 were still bound together.

Said an instructor: "We try to see who gets loose and only sees to his own interests in contrast to the man who helps his friends escape. It's an important aspect of the motivation that we try to instill in these men."

Another particularly hair-raising test takes place only after the men have completed their commando training, i.e. after 42 weeks of intensive training. The individual is required to spend a night or two alone in bush country adjoining Angola. This test is undertaken with only a weapon and ammunition, and a match box.

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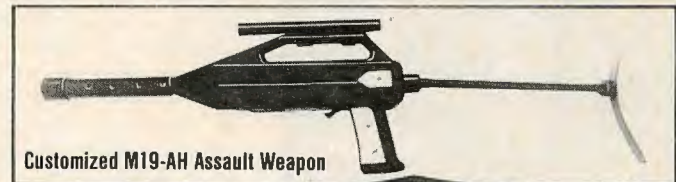
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(continued from page 24)

Vietnamese to Vietnam. A further message came from Washington, ordering Martin to stop all flights until a policy, agreeable to all parties, could be worked out.

Martin, angered by this interference, tore up the messages and never showed them to Smith or Baughn.

Martin, smarting under attacks upon his authority, later found a message Baughn had sent to Washington, projecting anticipated troop requirements during evacuation from Tan Son Nhut. Martin was furious. Baughn had sent this message without authority, although he claimed it had been cleared prior to transmission by the staff officer on duty at the embassy. The officer clearing the message, however, had not understood exactly what he had cleared. Martin called Washington, and Baughn was recalled. The Americans lost their most energetic evacuation planner.

On April 17, Washington sent Martin a cable, instructing him to speed up evacuation. He protested, since he believed that if he started evacuating Americans now, it would threaten the safety of those Americans remaining in Saigon. There had been reports of South Vietnamese firing on American aircraft during the evacuation of Danang. He told the President and Kissinger that as far as he could determine at this time there would be no Communist attack on Saigon.

Meanwhile, President Thieu, who had already sent his wife and family out of Vietnam with numerous artifacts from museums and—rumor had it—large quantities of gold, was now under extreme pressure to resign. Although Martin urged Thieu to remain in office, the president resigned on April 21, 1977.

Snepp reports that he was chosen to drive Thieu to Tan Son Nhut and a waiting aircraft. He recalls that enroute, when passing a large sign which read, "The Noble Sacrifices of Allied Soldiers Will Not Be Forgotten," Thieu sighed and looked away. At the departure point, Thieu, tears in his eyes, reached over, grasped Snepp's hand, and said, "thank you." He then left the automobile, boarded the waiting aircraft, and departed his beloved Vietnam.

Although several evacuation options were now being discussed among Gayler, Martin, and others involved in policy making, it was too late.

On April 30, 1975, the most disgusting day in American history began. Kissinger cabled Martin to start the evacuation now; he wanted all Americans out of Vietnam by nightfall. This signalled the beginning of the end, and in the confusion many loyal Vietnamese employees were left behind.

The Korean contingent in Vietnam, including Gen. Rhee Dai Yong, former

DEPCOM of Korean forces in Vietnam and former head of the KCIA, was abandoned by the Americans. Last Snepp heard, he was in prison in Vietnam.

The American representative for IBM in Bangkok contacted Saigon and said that he had tried to land at Tan Son Nhut to evacuate 300 IBM employees and their families. Landing permission was refused. He then spoke with the embassy and said that if they would do nothing to help his employees, he would contact the White House. Although he placed his call to Washington, nothing was done. The loyal employees were left behind to fend for themselves against the Communists.

Martin ordered \$2 million in embassy contingency funds to be burnt by the Marines. After they had stuffed the currency into trash cans, doused it with gasoline, and set it afire, an embassy official yelled, "stop!" This unnamed official declared that Martin had changed his mind, believing that a settlement could still be reached. The fire was put out.

Later in the day, evacuation helicopters scattered hundreds of thousands of dollars through the embassy courtyard. One official palmed over \$80,000. In the months to come, thousands of charred bills would turn up in refugee camps in Guam and the Philippines.

Seventy CIA translators and their families were waiting to be rescued at a compound in Saigon. Their working knowledge of CIA operations in Vietnam was extensive. However, the CIA agent in charge of their evacuation had fled Vietnam earlier in the day: they were left behind.

Of the Vietnamese who worked for the CIA, 537 of 1,900 escaped, together with 2,000 of their families. Snepp declared that certain agents released this information to him because they were so outraged by this incident of betrayal.

Even so, on the morning of the evacuation, with Vietnamese Rangers battling Communists on the Newport Bridge on the outskirts of Saigon, Ambassador Martin was still confident that the NVA would not attack Saigon for at least 48 hours.

Finally, U.S. Marines blew up the DAO building across from Tan Son Nhut Air Base, after battling Vietnamese who were waiting to be evacuated.

4,500 people, including 450 Americans, managed to flee Saigon on that fateful day. Tens of thousands who wanted to leave were abandoned. Finally the last radio message was transmitted from Saigon:

"Saigon signing off."

Frank Snepp departed Vietnam at 0753 hours 30 April 1977.



Combat Pistol Craft

(continued from page 9)

In considering the proper selection of ammunition, I refer to a small advertisement carried in a Marine Corps publication, during the mid-1950s. It made the subtle stipulation that one would be advantaged by purchasing a S & W model 15 along with some W - W metal piercing .38 Spl. ammunition, should he/she become involved in a body armor situation. A person armed with the model 1911 .45 auto and ball ammunition would certainly be at a disadvantage in the same situation. The popularity, scoring potential, and stopping power of the .45 auto are well known to pistol shooters, but the fact that there are no effective rounds commercially available that will penetrate the Kevlar vest, KTW included, leaves this and other weapons that do not have the ability to penetrate body armor, in a state of questionable value.

The 9 x 9mm Parabellum .38 Special and .357 Magnum offer the greatest potential in this area, but even in these calibers caution should be taken. Recent tests show that the KTW 105 gr. bronze bullet, .38 Spl. caliber, fails to penetrate Kevlar vest of 25 layers or so; these rounds were fired, at a few feet, from two and three-inch barreled guns. The KTW 90 gr. pointed steel bullets will penetrate these vests, but these rounds have been discontinued. The .357 Magnum seems to be adequate in KTW, W-W, and in the 9mm it is only the KTW that will penetrate Kevlar. If there is any hope for the H5 auto, it is in zinc alloy bullets. I have some of these and they do an impressive job on Kevlar armor, but they are no longer manufactured.

I hope that this has been informative and that it will raise some questions concerning this problem.

W. B. H.

Nacogdoches, Texas

A: Thanks for the information. Maybe some of our readers have a comment.

* * * * *

Q: I am interested in keeping in practice for shooting competition and improvement of my skill. Unfortunately, I do not have a regular place where I can practice. As well, I can't afford to spend money on enough ammunition each week to exercise my skill in shooting. Do you have an idea of particular conditioning, exercise, and drills that I can do on a regular basis while at home to improve my shooting skill? I do some "dry firing." Will this hurt particular types of weapons?

D. R.

Lakewood, Colorado

A: Non-shooting conditioning can be divided into two phases: Strengthening exercises and skill exercises. For grip strength I suggest the grip exercise device available at most sport shops, although squeezing a tennis ball will achieve the same result.

The best skill exercise for marksmanship is dry firing. This will teach you the essentials of sight picture, trigger squeeze and breath control. Developing a smooth draw and quick reload are also skills that may be developed and polished away from the range.

Dry firing will not harm any quality center-fire weapon suitable for practical pistol shooting.

* * * * *

Q: I enjoy all types of shooting sport, be it P.P.C., hunting, or combat shooting. Through the N.R.A., P.P.C. shooting has enjoyed great following and publicity. The skill of "trap shooting" has gone to Olympic sport status. Do you see combat shooting becoming a major sport in the U.S.? Do you anticipate television coverage of the top matches? Could the combat style of shooting sport become a part of the Olympic Games?

P. M.

Denver, Colorado

A: The growth of practical pistol competition and the formation of the International Practical Shooting Confederation have been amazingly swift. The advancement made in the last few years

under the guidance of Jeff Cooper would lead one to conclude that media coverage and Olympic status may someday be a fact. Recent N.R.A. communications with I.P.S.C. would tend to confirm the wide-spread interest in practical pistol competition.

* * * * *

Q: In the March '77 issue of SOF, [you] discussed the Detonics .45. There were a few things that should have been covered that weren't. For example, how accurate was the gun? How well did it stand up once a few hundred rounds had been put through it? How did recoil compare with other .45s? This sort of information can be extremely important when trying to get an idea as to how good or bad a new gun is, especially if you do not know someone who owns one. Most of us do not.

E.M.C.

Aurora, Colorado

A: Unfortunately, many of the weapons that are sent to gun writers for field test are on loan for a few days only before they must be shipped to the next gun writer on the list. Such was the case with the Detonics. Time was, frankly, insufficient to perform the tests to which I normally subject a weapon. To answer your question about the Detonics in a subjective manner: I feel that accuracy was sufficient for short range only. This was more a deficiency in sights and sight radius than inherent accuracy. The weapon should hold up very well under extensive firing. The piece is all steel and very solid, unlike the light weight Star PD. Recoil felt about the same as a lightweight Colt Commander. It was more controllable than the Star PD. I hope this has at least answered your questions in part.

* * * * *



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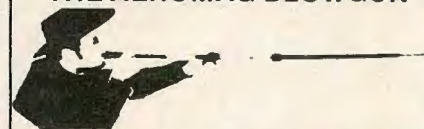
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In January, 1977 four SOF staff members made the annual pilgrimage to the National Sporting Goods Association convention in Houston. As usual there were a number of new and intriguing items of interest to the professional adventurer.



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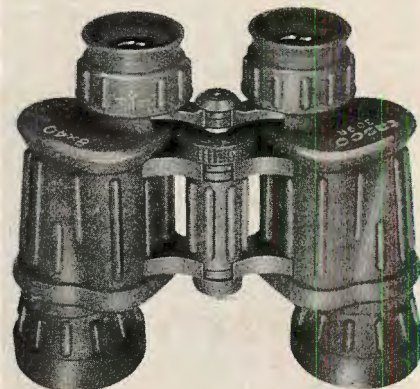
struction, ventilated rib, double or single action, barrels of 5", 6", 7", 8" and 10", adjustable sights, and hammer block and magazine safety. Weight: 49 ounces with 6" barrel. For further info write: Wildey Firearms, Box 284, Cold Springs, NY 10516.



The COMMANDO (see photo) has to be the state-of-the-art crossbow. As can be seen, most of the weapon is finished in matte black. The final production model will probably be completely matte black. Pull will be somewhere between 200 and 250 pounds giving the 400 grain broadhead bolt a flat trajectory and relatively high energy. The production model will feature spacers between the hooked butt plate and main frame thus allowing for different body types. Metals used on

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CHARTER ARMS INTRODUCES FIVE NEW HANDGUNS

In the largest single introduction in the history of the company, Charter Arms has announced five new handguns.

All new models incorporate many innovative features for which Charter Arms handguns have become known, including the use of chrome-moly steel as a fabricating material for frame, cylinder, and barrel, while non-critical parts are fabricated from a durable weight-saving alloy. Hammers are completely blocked and the firing pins made of unbreakable beryllium copper. Barrels are button rifled with eight grooves instead of the conventional six.

The new Target Bulldog .44 Special

offers a four-inch barrel, is nine inches long, 5 1/8 inches high, weighs 20 ounces and has fully adjustable sights. The Bulldog .357 Magnum has a six-inch barrel, is 11 inches long, 5 3/8 inches high, weighs 25 ounces and offers fixed sights. The new Undercover .38 Special is now available with a four-inch barrel, nine inch overall length, 4 7/8 inches high, weighs in at 18 1/2 ounces, and has fixed sights. There are two .22 caliber handguns, the Pathfinder .22LR with a six-inch barrel, 10 5/8 inches overall length, five inches high, 22 1/2 ounces with fully adjustable sights plus the Pathfinder .22 Mag. with exactly the same specifications.

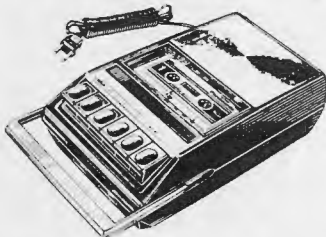
All the new models have square butt grips as standard.



SAVAGE introduces a new metallic silhouette rifle dubbed the 110-S. Chambered in .308, the 110-S features a 22" free floating tapered barrel, 7/8" at the muzzle. The select walnut stock has high

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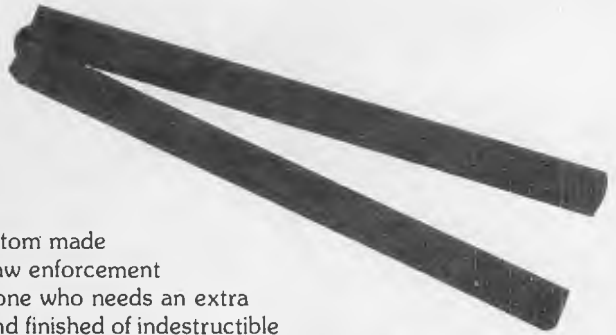
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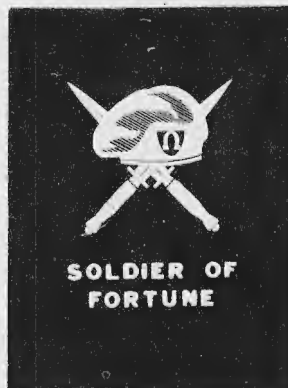
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Steele On Knives

(continued from page 17)

longer continue. The *gauchos* (cowboys) of Argentina habitually carry knives for skinning, butchering, and eating. When they go to the local dance hall, after a few drinks, they sometimes get into fights. Invariably these knife fights go to disablement and sometimes to death.

In the United States, as well, some knife fights are directed toward disablement. For example, in my book on knife fighting I mentioned a fight between two black janitors, one armed with a penknife and the other armed with a 24-inch steel rod. The man with the penknife practically removed the nose of the other man. Fights to disablement can be extremely messy and do not always favor the man with perfect fencing technique. If a man is willing and able to accept a number of cuts on his left hand and arm he may be able to get inside the guard of his more skilled opponent and give a crippling thrust. This type of fighting requires the type of determination for which war heroes and some psychopaths are noted.

The last type of knife fighting is a duel to the death. This type of knife fighting may in fact result in disablement, but the intent of each opponent is to deliver a killing thrust in the shortest possible time. In centuries past, the weapon favored for this type of duelling was the "small sword." This sword in its highest form had no edge, just a triangular blade with a deep fuller down the center (to lighten the blade), ending in a sharp point. Maiming cuts to the extremities were impossible and, unlike the epee which was customarily used for a first blood thrust to arm or leg, the small sword (from which the fencing foil was developed) was directed against the torso. The modern equivalent of this type of duelling might be the use of icpickers and triangular-bladed daggers, neither of which can be used to make crippling cuts to tendons or muscles.

Although the classic knife against knife duel is what most people imagine when knife fighting is discussed, it is not necessarily the most common use of the knife. The knife man may use his blade to oppose the strength of a larger man, hopefully limiting his cuts to nonvital targets. Also, he may find himself opposing a tire iron, crowbar, club, meat cleaver, machete, or samurai sword. He must be able to vary his tactics accordingly. To use the knife in an aggressive fashion against an unwary victim requires no technique or skill; to use it defensively against an armed and dangerous opponent requires a high level of skill, bluff, and determination.

In the United States the handgun is the weapon of choice for the adult law-abiding citizen for the defense of his home and loved ones. In some States illegal concealment of a handgun is pun-

ished less severely than a knife, perhaps indicating that to judges and legislators the people who have a legitimate right to self-defense can afford to own a pistol and do not have the spare time (or the strength) to learn the use of less modern weapons. For example, in California carrying a handgun concealed without a permit is a misdemeanor, while carrying a stiletto is a felony.

Also, permits are rarely issued in any State for any weapon other than the handgun. One wonders if judges and lawmakers deal with knife offenses more severely because they are associated with the young, and everyone knows that the teenager and young adult commit most of the violent crimes in this country. In any case, that is an interesting matter for speculation.

Since few martial arts schools teach knife fighting, just about the only places to learn it are in the streets or on the fencing strip. However, unlike

karate, which was once practiced by a different clientele from street fighters but which is now used in every back alley and bar, fencers in this country have rarely been of the social class which is most likely to use knives in anger. In the Philippines 10-year-old boys stand on street corners and practice opening and closing their *balisong* butterfly knives. In this country it is much the same, with boys teaching each other to stick and jab, combining their moves with what they know of boxing. A few people, like Fairbairn, Applegate, Styers, and myself, have tried to adapt fencing techniques to the art of knife fighting, but it is unlikely that knife practice will ever again be actively taught in *salle d'armes* as it was in the 1830s.



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